SC junks suit vs Meralco as PPA protests spread

STORY ON PAGE A2

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RP-US logistics pact in the works

By Juliet L. Javellana and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE PROPOSED Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement with the United States is in the works, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes confirmed yesterday.

Reyes said that a technical working group of the Departments of Defense,

RP-US/A15

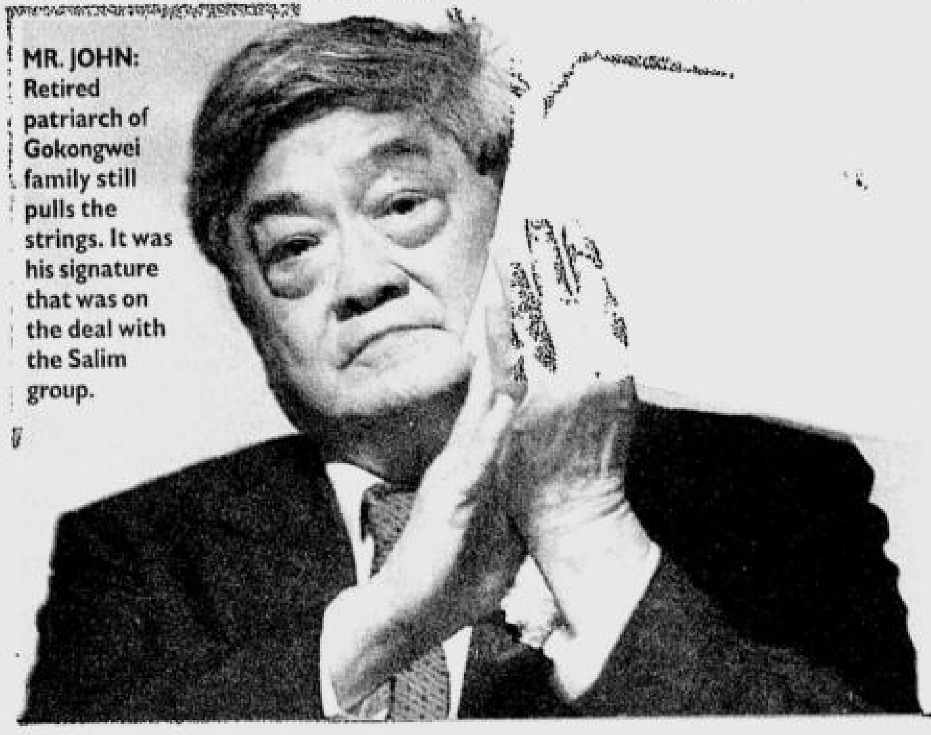
Pinoy student wins UN painting contest

By Stella O. Gonzales

A FILIPINO high school senior has won an international painting competition on the environment, proving once again that the Philippines has its fair share of talented people.

Joannalyn G. Wong, 16, of Cayetano Arellano High School in Ma-

PINOY/A15



MR. JOHN: Retired patriarch of Gokongwei family still pulls the strings. It was his signature that was on the deal with the Salim group.

PLDT, Fort Bonifacio land sold to Gokongwei family for $925M

By Doris C. Dumlao

HONG KONG conglomerate First Pacific Co. Ltd. yesterday agreed to sell its controlling stake in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Bonifacio Land Co. to the family of taipan John Gokongwei Jr. for $925 million.

Bloodied from its investments here, First Pacific decided to relinquish control of its property and telecommunications ventures in the Philippines to the Gokongwei family for less than half the price it had paid for them.

But analysts said that the deal was not a foregone conclusion since there could be legal challenges from the management of the two companies involved, although it appeared to be structured to try and circumvent such obstacles.

A high PLDT official last night said the present management would challenge the deal in court. "Mr. Gokongwei is engaged in a business that competes with PLDT and its subsidiaries. His entry into PLDT violates the laws against monopolies," he said.

The Gokongweis confirmed in a news conference that they would form a joint venture with First Pacific that would see them take over First Pacific's controlling stakes in PLDT, the country's largest telecommunications firm, and property firm Metro Pacific Corp.'s equity interest in Bonifacio Land Co.

Under the deal, the Gokongwei group valued First Pacific's investments in PLDT and Metro Pacific at $925 million as against the $1.99 bil-

PLDT/A15

FBI: Lacson has dollar deposits

'I never denied I opened accounts'

THE FEDERAL Bureau of Investigation has confirmed that Sen. Panfilo Lacson maintains "three to four" bank accounts in the United States, "TV Patrol" reported on ABS-CBN yesterday evening.

But the accounts contain much less than the reported millions the senator had supposedly kept in the United States. "TV Patrol" said the biggest account contained about $200,000.

Lacson had earlier denied that he had bank accounts abroad.

LACSON: Controversy hounds him as ghosts from the past haunt him.

"The truth is, I am not maintaining accounts in any banks in Hong Kong, Canada and the US, or anywhere in the world except the Philippines," Lacson said in a privileged speech on Aug. 6, 2001.

Lacson delivered the speech to deny the allegation of Col. Victor Corpus, head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), that he had laundered $211.4 million through eight bank accounts in Hong Kong, Canada and the United States.

Corpus had said that the bulk of the deposits came from drug trafficking, kidnap-for-ransom activities and bank robberies.

Confronted with the "TV Patrol" report, Lacson yesterday said he "never denied that I opened accounts in the United States but these were already closed and the contents were a far cry from the amount they are trying to project."

"I will maintain my earlier challenge that if they find anything and whatever they find they can divide among themselves," said Lacson, the Philippine National Police chief of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

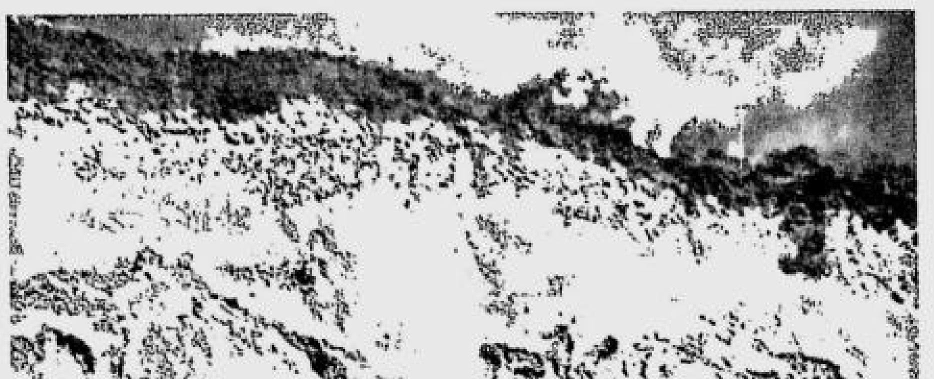
ABS-CBN based its story on a videotape of a meeting between Reynaldo Wycoco, National Bureau of Investigation chief, and representatives of the US Attorney General's Office and the FBI.

ABS-CBN did not say when or how the video was taken, who took it and how the television network obtained it. Last month, Wycoco visited the United States to confer with FBI officials.

The video aired by ABS-CBN showed Kyle Latimer, senior legal officer at the US Attorney General's Office, telling Wycoco: "There are some accounts, far fewer than initial reports. And I believe there are only three to four accounts, and far less money."

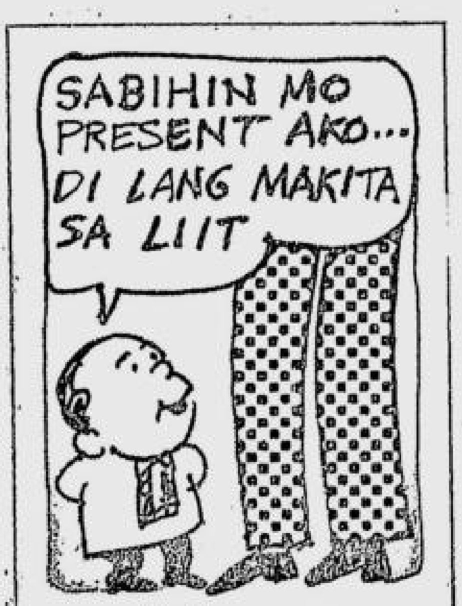
"I think the most in one account was $200,000 and there was no record of millions having gone through," Latimer said.

FBI/A14



VAL HANDUMON

CONQUERING PINATUBO
President Macapagal treks up Mt. Pinatubo to promote the volcano as a tourist destination—no mean feat considering that her presidency has been an uphill climb.



SABIHIN MO PRESENT AKO... DI LANG MAKITA SA LIIT

Johnny kids Ping on roll call

By Rocky Nazareno

CREDIT the jovial Sen. Juan Flavier for easing the tension between the administration and opposition senators if only for a moment.

Flavier had just taken the elevator from the sixth floor of the Senate building where the administration coalition had

JOHNNY/A15

'If they want to look ridiculous, it's up to them'

By Cynthia Balana, Christine Avendaño and Juliet Javellana

TO HAMMER its point home, opposition congressmen conducted a "session" in the House of Representatives lobby yesterday, complete with a rusty hammer in place of the usual gavel. Opposition senators also held a session, but they mixed their work with a combination of the symbolic and the actual.

The "new majority" in the Senate passed the absentee voting bill—a measure that will have to be reintroduced during the second regular session of Congress, the House of Representatives having already adjourned.

But the senators also clipped the powers of Senate President Franklin Drilon to disburse Senate funds by ordering the Land Bank of Philippines not to honor his signature on checks without his co-signatory, "new majority leader" Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

The House majority laughed off the minority session, including the threat to have Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II arrested.

"What we have witnessed is not a session but a circus of the 'Martilyo Gang'," Gonzales said in a press briefing with Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. and Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles. The three majority congressmen talked to reporters while

IF/A14

Opposition tells GMA not to interfere in fight

By Cynthia Balana, Rocky Nazareno and Carlito Pablo

"STAY out!"

Opposition senators told off the President yesterday, after administration lawmaker Sen. Ramon Revilla confirmed that President Macapagal-Arroyo had called him up in the United States to ask him not to bolt the administration coalition.

But an influential Church official, Ricardo Cardinal Vidal of Cebu, asked the President to intervene in the Senate impasse "to avert not just a constitutional but an economic crisis as well."

Even so, administration senators led by Senate President Franklin Drilon adopted a new tack yesterday, saying they were open to striking a deal with the "new majority." "We're now open to any solution but that would be hard to find. Even those in media, we would,

OPPOSITION/A14

Senate coup by new majority an exercise in futility

By Raul J. Palabrica

ANALYSIS

THE SENATE "coup" may be considered a deft political move of the opposition, but it did not accomplish anything good for the opposition senators. Instead, it gave the impression to the public that politics is an exercise the senators are prepared to engage in whenever the opportunity presents itself.

When the first regular session of the present Congress opened last year, Sen. Sergio Osmeña derailed the organization of the Senate with his three-day filibuster. He expressed his willingness to talk endlessly (he even threatened to fornicate on the floor) until the Senate leadership gave in to his demands on the allocation of committee positions.

Fortunately, the senators were able to come up with a compromise agreement that prevented Osmeña from further wasting the people's money with his useless blabber.

In what appears to be a reverse repeat of history, as the regular session entered its final days, another Osmeña, this time Sen. John Osmeña, threw a monkey wrench into the otherwise smooth Senate proceedings by bolting the administration coalition and making common cause with the opposition to effect changes in the Senate leadership short of the presidency.

True, the opposition can find some comfort in the 1949 decision of the Su-

SENATE/A14

Second FRONT PAGE

SAYANG, NA-DISMISS!

SC junks consumer suit; PPA protests spread

By Michael Lim Ubac and Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE SUPREME Court has dismissed a petition from a lawyer seeking to stop the Manila Electric Co. from collecting the purchased power adjustment charge, even as consumer resistance to the PPA and Meralco's bid to increase electricity rates snowballed into nationwide protest actions yesterday.

In the resolution dated May 28 but released only yesterday, the high court junked lawyer Mar Torres Reyes' petition for "failure to exhaust administrative remedies."

Reyes should have first sought relief before administrative bodies like the Energy Regulatory Commission which regulates the power sector, the high court said.

The protests, which began with a motorcade and marches early yesterday morning, were to culminate in an hour-long protest blackout at 9 p.m. last night. Organizers touted it as the biggest mass action since the April 29 and May 15 protests.

At dusk, 5,000 protesters belonging to the People Opposed to Warrantless Electricity Rates (Power) and militant groups led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan marched to the Don Chino Roces Bridge in Mendiola to stage a noise barrage at 6 p.m.

Organizers said protests were also held by anti-PPA groups in Metro Manila, Baguio City, Pampanga, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Cavite, Laguna, Albay, Camarines Sur, Cebu, Negros, Bacolod, Iloilo-Panay, Davao City, Iligan, General Santos City, Cagayan de Oro and other cities and urban centers nationwide.

"The escalating protests against the PPA calls for concrete action from Malacañang, the House and the Senate," said Elmer Labog, secretary general of Kilusang Mayo Uno.

Labog said the mere reduction or suspension of PPA payments was not enough.

"We want the PPA totally abolished, not just suspended or replaced with universal charges. We also demand that the government junk Meralco's petition for a new rate hike," he said.

The PPA is an automatic cost recovery mechanism to cover adjustments not included in the basic electricity rate, such as the cost of power purchased from independent power producers (IPPs).

The state-run National Power Corp. normally collects the PPA charges from distribution utilities like Meralco which in turn pass these on to consumers.

Reyes, who claimed to represent "all electric consumers-customers of Meralco," petitioned the SC on May 7 to declare as "illegal" the collection of the PPA for being unconstitutional.

Reyes chairs the Bar Association, a "voluntary bar organization" composed of lawyers from Metro Manila, regional trial court judges, and past and present officials of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

At 9 a.m. yesterday, a protest motorcade started from the Quezon Memorial Circle drawing support from employees of the government offices in the area. It wound its way through the communities and commercial centers of Caloocan City, San Andres, Malate, Sta. Mesa and Sampaloc in Manila before meeting up with the marchers in Mendiola.

In Metro Manila, protest actions were held in Caloocan, Elliptical Road, Sta. Mesa, San Andres, Sampaloc, Tondo, E. Rodriguez Ave., Payatas, UP Diliman, Barangay Piñahan, Valenzuela, Navotas, Project 3, Antipolo, Muntinlupa, Taguig, Mandaluyong, Pasay, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Kamuning-Edsa, Crossing-Edsa, Taytay, Pandacan and Philcoa in Quezon City.

Labog said the KMU will continue the protests until the ERC releases its decision on the Meralco's petition for a rate hike on June 26.

In Iloilo City, at least 500 protesters picketed the Panay Electric Co. (Peco) to protest high power rates and the controversial PPA.

Consumers are opposing Peco's pending rate hike petition for a 36-centavo per kWh increase.

In Baguio City, about 60 members of the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA) also protested the coup at the Senate when they gathered on Session Road to lead a noise barrage against the PPA.

CPA official Voltaire Tupaz said the Senate crisis has galvanized consumers into organizing against the chamber. ***Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk, Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Ryan D. Rosauro and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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Imee: Uncle Kokoy handled Meralco sale

By Christine Avendaño

FOLLOWING up on her earlier claim that the Marcos government had bought the Lopez family shares in the Manila Electric Co., Ilocos Rep. Imee Marcos said yesterday it was her uncle, Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, who handled the alleged purchase for the regime of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"I know that he (Romualdez) was negotiating with the Lopez family," Marcos told reporters in an interview.

Marcos said that Romualdez—who was the Marcos-appointed ambassador to the United States, among other official positions—former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and former Energy Secretary Ronnie Velasco would know the details of the 1973 purchase by the government of the 33-percent share of the Lopezes in Meralco.

"My understanding was that Meralco was nationalized and the National Power Corp. was the one that managed it," Marcos said.

At that time, she said, the "thinking" was that "government could bring prices down . . . and provide good services."

Marcos' disclosures on the alleged Meralco sale came after Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran and Iloilo Rolex Suplico told a House hearing on Tuesday that the Lopezes had offered to sell their Meralco shares to the Marcos regime and these had been sold for P1.2 billion.

At the same hearing, Suplico had asked how the Lopezes managed to recover their shares in Meralco shortly after Marcos was ousted and President Corazon Aquino came to power in 1986.

He asked Meralco officials to produce the power utility's stocks and transfer book at the next hearing.

Marcos had raised the same question yesterday, noting that she never heard how the Lopezes managed to get back their shares and regain control of Meralco.

If the government shares were sequestered, there were also no reports about it, she added.

"There should have been a PCGG or administration supervisor over the assets but we have not heard of such (a) report," Marcos said.

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Alvarezes left hanging

THE REAPPOINTMENT to the Cabinet of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, both of whom have been bypassed yet again by the congressional Commission on Appointments, is still up in the air.

Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable yesterday could not say for sure if the transportation secretary had been re-appointed.

"All I know is that nothing has been signed yet," Afable said.

Pantaleon Alvarez was technically bypassed when the CA decided to hear out two vital witnesses in the allegedly irregular contract with the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) for the construction of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's Terminal 3.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, was also technically bypassed when Congress adjourned following the crisis triggered by the defection of Sen. John Osmeña to the opposition.

The sudden adjournment is believed to have derailed a plan by legislators from the ruling Lakas-NUCD to call for a plenary vote on Alvarez's confirmation. Alvarez is the party's secretary general.

The CA has also effectively bypassed the appointment of Alfredo Benipayo, the chair of the Commission on Elections, who has been having a rough time before the commission.

Malacañang has insisted the two Alvarezes continue to enjoy the trust and confidence of President Macapagal-Arroyo despite the controversies that continue to block their confirmation. ***Carlito Pablo and Gerald G. Lacuarta***

Piatco continues Palace snub

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

MALACAÑANG can't seem to do much about the snub by the Philippine Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco).

Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable Jr. admitted yesterday that Piatco has not replied to the letter that Presidential Adviser Gloria Tan-Climaco wrote in February, proposing at least 28 revisions to the firm's contract to build Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Critics claimed the multimillion-dollar contract was grossly disadvantageous to the government. Afable reminded Piatco officials that it would be best if they responded to the letter.

"While (Malacañang) doesn't want to interfere in private business affairs, it would be best for the public to be enlightened on these issues," Afable said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had assigned Climaco, former chair of the giant accounting firm SGV, to evaluate the Piatco contract.

Climaco was ordered arrested by the Commission on Appointments last week for failing to appear at the confirmation hearing of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, who was accused of benefiting from the Piatco deal.

Climaco promised to appear on Monday, June 10, but all CA hearings have been canceled due to the Senate leadership shakeup.

Malacañang said it wanted a renegotiation of the Piatco deal based on Climaco's findings, but the firm has opposed the proposed changes.

The changes include the deletion of a provision giving Piatco the exclusive right to operate an international airport in Luzon; reinstatement of the government's right to intervene in the determination of non-public utility fees at the terminal; clarification on the terminal fee; and clarification on the attendant liabilities and government guarantee provisions.

Also yesterday, Piatco vice president Moises Tolentino Jr. said the CA should not give much weight to the testimony of former Piatco consultant Norbert Loesch, who told the CA that Alvarez received illegal payments from the construction firm.

Tolentino said Loesch had twice been convicted of fraud in Germany. Besides, Piatco fired Loesch because he was also doing consultancy work for the Mia/Naia Association of Service Organizations at the time, Tolentino said. Maso is the chief oppositor to Piatco's Naia 3 contract, as well as of Alvarez's confirmation.

Loesch said he volunteered to appear before the CA because Climaco confirmed to him, in the presence of Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and Presidential Legal Counsel Avelino Cruz, that Alvarez had indeed received illegal payments. ***With Norman Bordadora***

Filipino in discrimination suit vs US air carriers

BROWN, the color of his skin, got Filipino Edgardo Cureg thrown off a Continental Airlines flight bound for Florida last Dec. 31. He spent "the saddest New Year's Eve of my life alone, exhausted and depressed."

A permanent resident of the United States, the 34-year-old Cureg was asked to deplane with two other brown-skinned men. One of them was Guyana-born US citizen Michael Dasrath, who said he was singled out after taking his first class seat.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on Tuesday cited the incident in five lawsuits it filed against four major US airlines for "blatant discrimination" in ejecting passengers off planes. Named respondents were American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Northwest Airlines and United Airlines. The cases were filed in Los Angeles, Maryland, New Jersey, San Francisco and Washington.

Representing Cureg, Dasrath, two other men of Arab descent and one South Asian—the civil rights group said that in forcing the men off flights, "the airlines were indulging in discrimination, not enforcing security." The three other victims were also US citizens.

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee pointed out that the incidents were a reaction to last year's attack on US targets by Muslim extremists. The group said it had received more than 60 reports since Sept. 11 of people "perceived to be Arab-Americans" being forced off flights.

Reginald Shuford, an ACLU national staff attorney, said the other incidents happened on a Northwest flight on Oct. 23, an American flight on Oct. 31 and a United flight on Dec. 23. The lawsuits ask federal courts to declare that the airlines' actions violated the men's civil rights.

Dasrath, a 32-year-old New Yorker, said a fellow passenger glared at him and told the captain, "Those brown-skinned men are behaving suspiciously."

A United Airlines spokesperson said pilots had the right to remove passengers because of safety or behavioral issues. Continental's Rahsaan Johnson said the airline had a "strong policy against discrimination;" Northwest's Mary Beth Schubert expressed satisfaction "that our employees acted in accordance with FAA security directives and federal regulations. ***AP, AFP***

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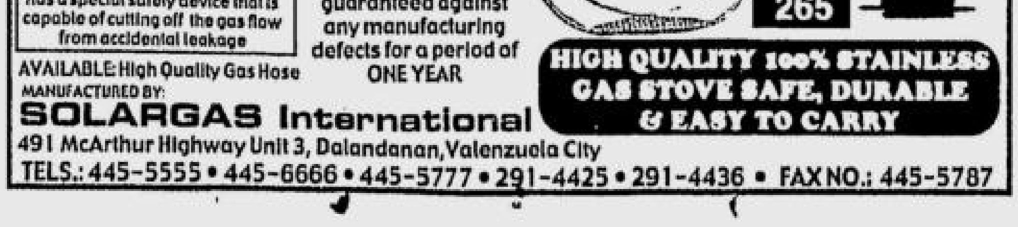
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Strife blocks OFW deployment

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE PHILIPPINE Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) will stop sending workers to India and Pakistan as tensions continue to escalate between the two nuclear-armed neighbors.

POEA administrator Rosalinda Baldoz said the Department of Foreign Affairs has told the agency to stop deploying workers even as the Department of Labor and Employment awaits word from the country's embassies in the two nations regarding the repatriation of Filipinos there.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier ordered the embassies to help the Filipinos in India and Pakistan return home.

From January to March this year, the POEA sent 80 overseas Filipino workers to Pakistan and 88 to India. There are currently 260 OFWs in Pakistan and 542 in India, apart from the families of embassy and labor officials who are based there.

Undersecretary Manuel Imson said the DOLE has ordered the release of P100 million as standby funds for the repatriation operation.

Baldoz, however, said many OFWs have refused to budge unless the situation becomes life-threatening, as they are loath to lose the income they could still earn.

The DFA has noted a "slackening of the tension" between the two states even as airline flights out of Islamabad and New Delhi remain fully booked since the United Nations and other countries began advising their nationals to leave.

DFA Assistant Secretary Victoriano Lecaros said embassy officials in Islamabad are considering the port city of Karachi as an alternative route out of Pakistan, while those in New Delhi are looking into the land routes toward the east through Bangladesh and Nepal.

The Philippine embassies in the two countries have also transformed some of their rooms into possible evacuation centers for the Filipinos there.

At the Senate, Sen. Loren Legarda had said the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration should use its standby funds to help those Filipinos who might get trapped in a war. ***With reports from Norman Bordadora and Cynthia D. Balana***

Warning vs malaria aired in metro area

By Armand N. Nocum

CLEAN your surroundings, especially if these are around flowing waterways like rivers and creeks, to avoid catching malaria.

This piece of advice was given by the Department of Health yesterday as it warned of an increase in malaria cases in Metro Manila this year.

In a statement, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said 20 malaria cases were recorded in Manila, Caloocan, Navotas, and Quezon City and the towns of Guiguinto, Meycauayan and Pulilan in Bulacan from January to May 18 this year.

Dayrit said this represented a 35-percent increase in the number of malaria cases compared to the same period last year.

"People must protect themselves from the anopheles mosquitoes by keeping the banks of (waterways) clean. They should also use mosquito nets, screens and insect repellent," Dayrit said.

He said the DOH was monitoring the situation to avert a rise in the incidence of malaria.

People near waterways are more vulnerable to the night-biting infected female mosquitoes because these breed in clear slow flowing waters in areas not exposed to sunlight. The mosquitoes remain infective for the rest of their lifespans.

Dayrit advised residents beside rivers and creeks to clear their banks of overhanging plants and trees—mosquito breeding places.

He said an infected person may experience fever, chills, sweating, cough, diarrhea, respiratory distress, headaches, blood-clotting problems, renal and liver failure, cerebral malaria, and pulmonary and cerebral edema. This could result in a coma or even death, he said.

According to Dayrit, patients who have been cured cannot infect others.

"Let us all do our share in maintaining a clean environment. This is the most practical thing to do to stop the spread of malaria," he said.

'Missing' Yank charged in blast

DAVAO CITY—American treasure hunter Michael Meiring has been charged with illegal possession of explosives and reckless imprudence in connection with the May 16 explosion in his room at the Evergreen Hotel here.

Raul Bendigo, chief city prosecutor, approved the filing of the charges against Meiring on recommendation of investigating prosecutor Arlene Palabrica.

According to the charge sheet, the prosecutor found probable cause Meiring was responsible for the explosion.

Palabrica said the American was also liable "for failing to practice proper attention and diligence regarding the handling of explosive materials."

But first, Meiring, 65, who was badly injured in the blast, will have to be returned to the country from which he was reportedly spirited by agents of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The FBI agents reportedly took the treasure hunter from his hospital bed here and flew him to the Makati Medical Center in Makati City.

The FBI then arranged Meiring's transfer to the burn unit of the Arrowhead Medical Research Center in Colton City, California, where he is undergoing leg surgery.

The INQUIRER has learned that the Davao City police has formed a team to coordinate with US Embassy officials in Manila for Meiring's return to the city.

Hotel workers Zander Bautista, Gerry Magdadaro and Emmanuel Ticson claimed that while they were cleaning Meiring's room before the explosion, he warned them not to touch two metal boxes, which he said contained important documents. ***Ayan C. Mellejor and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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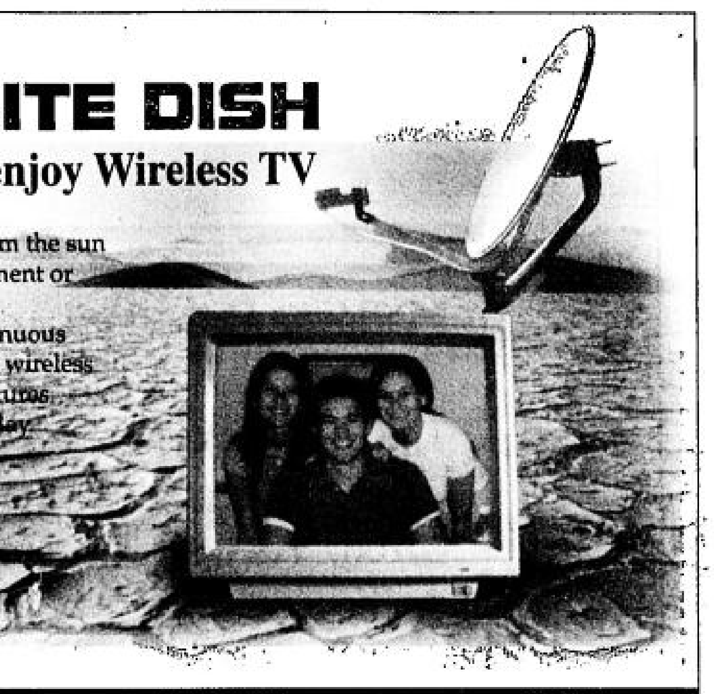

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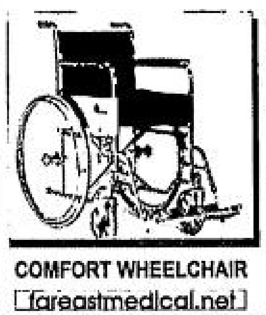

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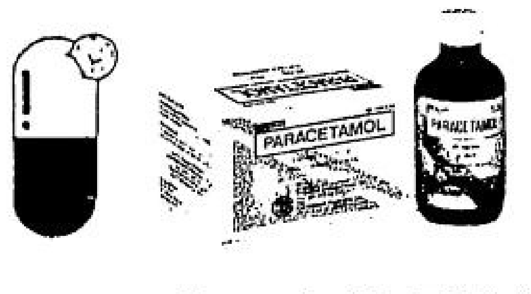

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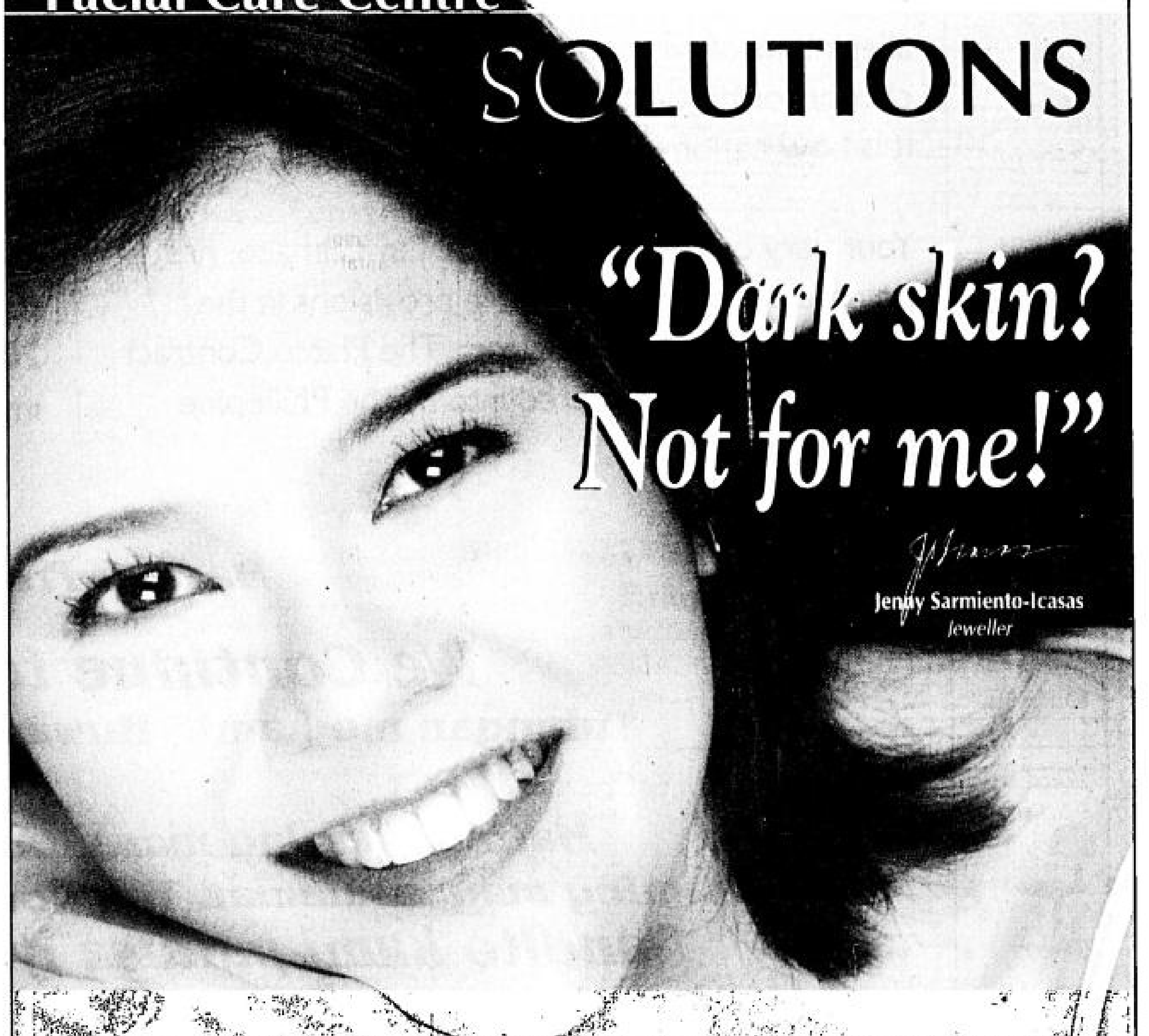

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Open Letter to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Listen to the Clamor of Your *Cabalens* in Central Luzon!

Replace Pantaleon Alvarez.
Cancel the Piatco Contract.
Negotiate for Better Terms.

Madame President:

The time has come for you to do what you must. Listen to the cries of your *Cabalens* in Central Luzon. We trust, Madame President, that you will do the right thing:

Replace Pantaleon Alvarez.
Cancel the Piatco Contract.
Negotiate for Better Terms.

Alvarez has been bypassed five times and more allegations of wrongdoing have surfaced. The clamor for his ouster goes beyond Central Luzon. It is now nationwide.

Your very own Adviser, Gloria Tan-Climaco, has pointed out 28 objectionable provisions in the Contract. One thing is clear: The Piatco Contract is the worst ever entered into by the Philippine government.

So, why do you continue to support Alvarez, the very person who boasted that the Contract is "the best ever"? Why is there this lingering impression that you are keeping him in your Cabinet, when allegations of graft and payoffs are widespread?

May mga nagsasabing nakikinabang daw po kayo sa Piatco deal. Hindi po kami naniniwala, Kaluguran ming Presidente.

May mga nagsasabing mayroon daw kayong alam sa US$5 million consultancy ni Liongson. Hindi pa rin kami kumbinsido, Mahal na Pangulo.

May mga nagsasabing 'di raw ninyo mabitawan si Alvarez dahil kailangan niyo siya sa Eleksyon 2004. Sa totoo lang, nagtitiwala pa rin kami sa inyo, Mahal naming *Cabalen*.

Madame President,

We Continue to Trust You.

Tulungan mo kami. Huwag mo kaming iiwanan.

Matindi kaming masaktan. Marunong naman kaming magpasalamat. You don't need Alvarez in 2004:
Nandito kami para sa iyo... noon pa man.

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Sambahayan ng mga
Taga Central Luzon

Owwa chief in trouble over ₱40-M fund release

By Blanche S. Rivera

ANOTHER unauthorized release of some P40 million, this time to cover retroactive employee benefits last year, has gotten the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration chief in deeper trouble.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said she might now recommend the suspension of Owwa administrator Wilhelm Soriano, who is also being questioned for P500-million worth of "irregular" investments in a government project seven years ago.

Sto. Tomas said Soriano released the P40 million last December without the approval of the Owwa board of trustees, which she chairs as head of the Department of Labor and Employment.

The amount represented half of the P80 million that the Owwa administration had claimed as benefits due since 1989. The benefits were not specified, but each employee received a compensation package worth an average of P80,000.

Sto. Tomas said that, as basis for their retroactive compensation claim, the Owwa employees cited a Supreme Court decision involving another employees' union of a defunct government agency.

She did not name names but, in a phone interview, the DOLE chief said, "They are holding a trust fund. They should be managing the money for OFWs, but they are squandering it."

Sto. Tomas chided the Owwa leadership for refusing to come up with a budget proposal that is within the perimeters set by Congress. Instead, she said, the agency insisted on a P13-billion budget, or 125 percent of its collection." She said it was the only budget that had not been approved by Congress because it was "way beyond the ideal."

The Pag-Ibig Fund, another welfare agency, used only two percent of its annual collection for its operations, and the Social Security System 12 percent, Sto. Tomas said.

The Owwa collects some P400 million from the $25 membership fee charged OFWs, 12.5 percent of which goes to employee's benefits alone.

Soriano is a presidential appointee and two-time Owwa administrator. Only the President or the Ombudsman can suspend him, but Sto. Tomas said she would recommend his suspension if the Owwa continued to defy instructions.

Lawyers want Jinggoy's bail hearing rushed

By Volt Contreras

CLAIMING that "incarceration is making him ill," lawyers for Jinggoy Estrada have asked the Sandiganbayan to speed up the bail hearings for deposed President Joseph Estrada's son by holding "whole day" sessions twice a week.

In a motion, Estrada's court-appointed lawyers said Jinggoy's medical emergencies that caused him to be rushed repeatedly to the Makati Medical Center from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center only showed his health problems stemmed from his detention.

The Sandiganbayan has been hearing the younger Estrada's application for bail the past two weeks. He has been charged as a co-conspirator in the plunder case against his father and several others.

Defense lawyers contend Jinggoy is entitled to bail since he was only implicated in the "jueteng" payola scandal, one of the four predicate crimes that make up the plunder charge.

Under the present trial schedule—8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays—it would be a long time before the prosecution got around to presenting evidence linking Jinggoy to "juetenggate," in which his father stands accused of receiving multimillion-peso kickbacks from gambling lords, the lawyers said in their motion.

State prosecutors have so far presented four witnesses who traced the "flow" of alleged jueteng money to the Estradas' accounts in several branches of Equitable PCIBank.

"It is noticeable the witnesses presented thus far have not linked (Jinggoy) to jueteng. It might take long before the prosecution can present evidence to prove, if ever, that the evidence against herein accused is strong," the motion said.

In a phone interview, Noel Malaya, one of the Estradas' lawyers, said the present schedule makes it difficult for them to meet their afternoon appointments.

"By ending at 1 p.m. or sometimes past one, we're virtually devoting our whole day to the (Estrada) trial, anyway," he said.

Last week, the prosecution said it had at least 10 more witnesses to present in the bail hearings, including juetenggate whistleblower, former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Assistant Ombudsman Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the next batch of witnesses will establish "where the money came from" before it was deposited by Yolanda Ricaforte at EPCIB.

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Tradition of instability

EDITORIAL

WHEN the 1916 Jones Law established the bicameral Philippine legislature composed of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Senate was envisaged to be the anchor of stability and maturity of the legislature. Its members were to be elected from senatorial districts, giving its members a regional, if not national outlook, transcending the more parochial concerns of House members.

The senators were to be elected later at large, giving them a national constituency, a concept that was supposed to endow them with statesmanship.

It has turned out, however, that the Senate has been more volatile and unstable than the House, and its members less than statesmen. Most of the upheavals in Congress have sprung from the Senate, which indeed has been the arena of power struggles not only within that chamber but also involving the presidency of the republic.

The current turmoil in the Senate, arising from the defection of Sen. John Osmeña from the administration coalition to the opposition, follows the Senate's tradition of instability. The shake-up in the Senate took place in just a few days before the end of the first regular session of the 12th Congress, underlying the instability spawned by an evenly divided Senate. Whatever Osmeña's reasons for his switch, whether they are trivial or profound, his disaffection with the coalition merely acted as the spark that ignited the opposition move to seize control of the Senate. The precarious balance was waiting for such a spark and it did not take too many excuses for the opposition to launch its coup.

There are contentions over whether Senate President Franklin Drilon did the right thing in adjourning the session three days ahead of the June 6 adjournment earlier set by both Houses of Congress and over whether the opposition broke the Senate rule that provides that a majority of its 24 members was required to change the Senate leadership and reorganize its committees. Drilon adjourned the Senate to blunt the opposition's plot to unseat the pro-administration leadership. The 12 opposition senators declared they had the majority to change, and they have continued to meet in a rump session, precipitating the first legislative stalemate in the Macapagal administration.

The first casualty of the impasse is the administration's legislative agenda which contains a number of economic reform measures, including those in the power sector. They will now be delayed until at least Congress reopens on July 22.

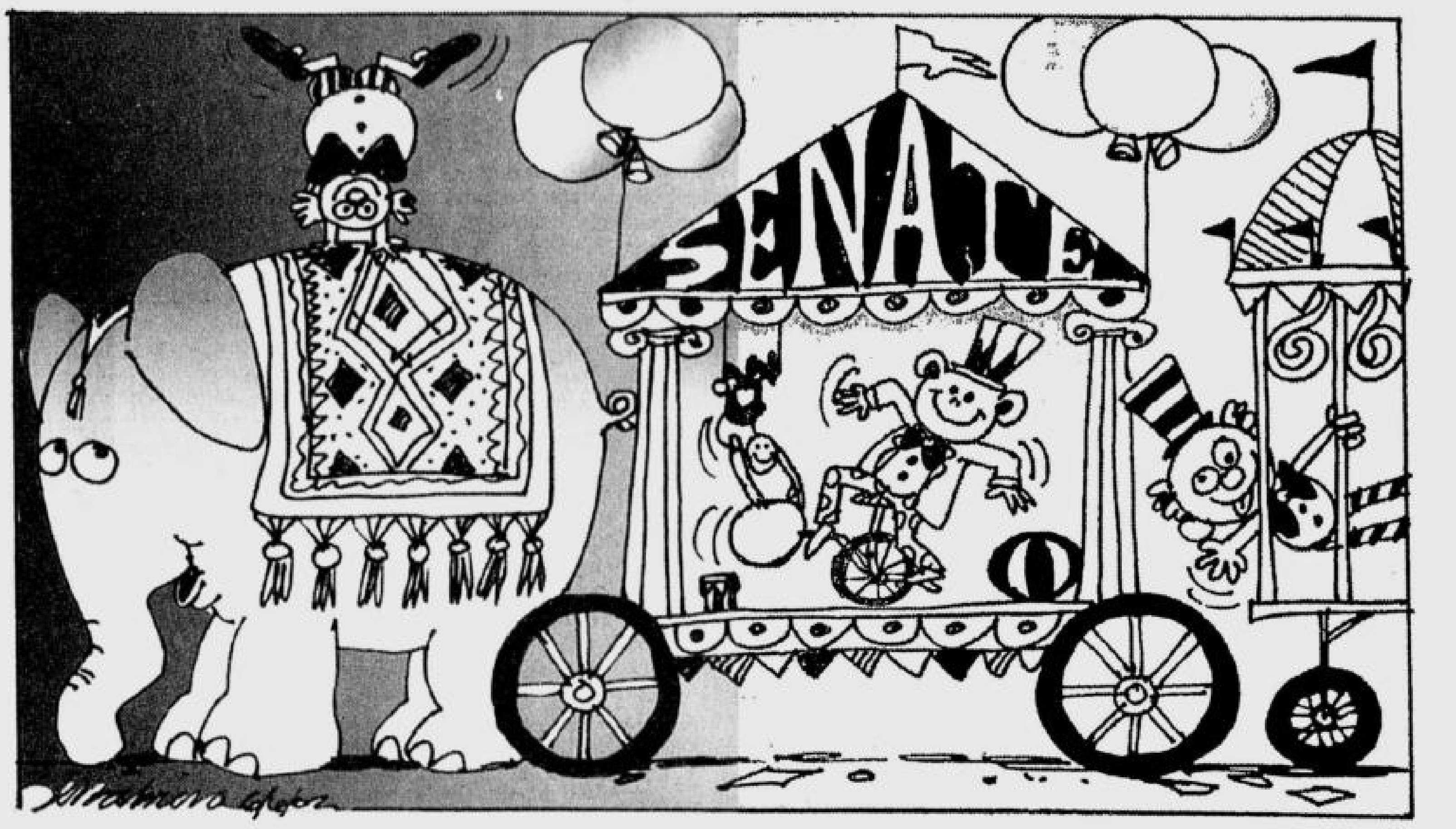
It is uncertain whether the opposition will challenge the constitutionality of Drilon's decision in the Supreme Court. Such a challenge would extend the stalemate into the second session. The prospects of a lengthy court case are not too reassuring for either legislative consensus on the legislative agenda or the passage of key reform bills.

The second casualty is the Macapagal administration. Its first legislative agenda has now been thrown off the rails at a time when it has just begun to give some momentum to its economic program and to consolidate its political control against efforts to destabilize it during the past year and a half.

The third casualty is the Senate. Unlike the House, which has achieved a working consensus on the legislative agenda and a measure of stability and predictability, the Senate is a picture of volatility. Public opinion surveys have shown a deep erosion of public confidence in the Senate. The turmoil in the Senate arising from countless investigations, distracting it from legislative work, has no doubt contributed to this erosion. The current upheaval, which basically is a conflict over who controls the Senate, could only have tarnished its public image further.

The opposition's attempt to grab control was not even competently executed. It tried to reorganize the committees but it didn't go far enough to strip Drilon of the Senate presidency. Apparently, it lacked conviction that it could depose him under Senate rules. The opposition did designate Sen. Blas Ople as president pro tempore—a move which appears to have violated the Senate rule requiring a majority to change the Senate leadership.

The impact of the stalemate is softened by the six-week recess, during which Congress does nothing anyway. But it is not far-fetched to think that the recess opens the way for contending political forces, including President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, to cut some deals in order to break the impasse.



Blame the Napocor for high power rates

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WITHIN the next several days, the chair of the Senate committee on silence, Sen. Ramon Revilla, will be the most sought-after senator. Fellow senators from the majority and opposition, or their emissaries, will rush to the United States, where Revilla is recuperating from surgery on his spine, to whisper sweet nothings into his ear. We will know how strong his spine has become after the surgery by whether or not he succumbs to the pressures and the enticements. For on his one vote depends whether or not Senate President Franklin Drilon stays as Senate chief.

Sen. Sonny Osmeña may have been the "weakest link" who finally broke away from the majority Senate coalition, but there are other "weaker links" on both sides. They will be under intense pressure in the next several days and weeks. Secret meetings, backroom talks and other cloak-and-dagger stuff will be the business of each day. Temptations, enticements, rewards and threats will fly back and forth. But victory will go to the highest bidder. That, in a nutshell, is the state of our society.

But what does it matter who is the Senate president and who are the chairpersons of the important Senate committees? For as long as it is the welfare of the nation that is the goal of the senators, it doesn't matter who controls the Senate. The fact that the two forces are desperately fighting for that control shows that their goal is not the nation's welfare but their own selfish interests. In the investigation of Sen. Panfilo Lacson, for example, will the findings be any different if the investigation had been fair and objective? They should not, but the fact that the report will change with the change in leadership of the Senate committees that investigated Lacson, shows that the senators are not objective and are, on the contrary, biased for or against Lacson.

So what else is new? This has happened so many times before in the Senate. And it will happen again. Don't forget that politicians are power-hungry and will try to grab power anytime they get the chance.

So don't let this latest power grab unsettle you. Like so many other unpleasant things, this, too, will pass.

* * *

Last June 3, this column explained how electric rates can be lowered by P1 per kilowatt-hour quickly and effortlessly. Simply remove the cross-subsidies—in which consumers in Central Luzon pay for part of the electric consumption of consumers in northern and southern Luzon and in the Visayas and Mindanao—and allow independent power producers (IPPs) that sell the cheapest power to operate at full capacity and transmit their electricity to the distributors. *Simple lang, 'di ba?*

Let the economies of scale work. Let the law of supply and demand work. We have an oversupply of electricity, so power rates should drop. But why doesn't it? Instead, the rates have increased. Why?

Because while there is an abundance of power producers, there is a monopoly in the transmission of this power to distributors like Meralco which, in turn, distribute it to your homes. This transmission monopoly is controlled by the National Power Corp., which also generates electricity—but at a higher cost. Before transmitting the lower-priced power of IPPs, the Napocor first transmits its higher-priced power. Result: high electric rates.

For example, the Napocor sells its power to Meralco at P4.40 per kWh. Quezon Power sells at only P3.80 and First Gas at only P3.35.

By buying more electricity from its two IPPs, Meralco can charge its customers less per kWh. But at present Meralco buys only 33 percent of its power requirements from its two IPPs and 66 percent of the Napocor's higher-priced power. Why? Because of what the Napocor calls "transmission constraints."

Simply put, it means the Napocor cannot transmit all the power generated through its transmission lines. In short, the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos allowed the construction of so many power plants—and guaranteed payment of all their generated capacities—knowing fully well that the transmission lines cannot transmit all that power.

* * *

Let me compare the transmission lines, or "grid" to a highway that brings electricity to your homes. Right now, there is plenty of electricity from the power plants, like so many farm produce from the farms. But the truckloads of farm products cannot be accommodated in the narrow highways to the markets. So the produce rot in the farms. That is what happens to the abundant electricity produced by the power plants which cannot reach your homes because of "transmission constraints."

If the more efficient IPPs like Quezon Power and First Gas can transmit more of its lower-priced electricity, our electric bills will be lower. But they now operate at less than 40 percent capacity. The Napocor's "transmission constraints" prevent them from operating at 83 to 86 percent capacity as provided in their contracts because the transmission lines, the "highway," cannot deliver that volume to Meralco. If they can operate at "an appropriate capacity," said Meralco treasurer Rafael Andrada, "a lower rate is guaranteed." The PPA would come down to only 60 centavos per kWh.

In short, cheap power is there. Meralco wants to buy more of it. The trouble is, the Napocor is allowing only 33 percent of it to pass through its "highway." As a result, Meralco is forced to buy more than 66 percent of its power requirements from the Napocor which sells at a higher price.

The other side of the coin

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S another side to the coin of buying Filipino. That is for Filipino products—and services—to deserve being bought. Or for the people who produce them to deserve being patronized.

PAL is a case in point. Remarkably, Lucio Tan's apologists have defended it against an "open skies" policy on nationalist grounds, notwithstanding that that is a concept Tan himself so little grasps. Or is downright contemptuous of, having been heard to comment on the innate laziness of Filipino workers during his confrontation with his unions some years ago. One overseas Filipino worker wrote me to ask pointedly why he should patronize the monopolists in the country who exploit their workers ruthlessly—which is one of the reasons, he said, why people like him are driven to distant shores to look for work—while constantly griping about unfair competition from outside. Like Tan, he said. He has a point.

PAL's case shows what kind of protection this country really needs. Or what kind of protectionism this country really does **not** need. It has to do with the extent and duration of protection.

The extent of protection may be simply put this way. We need protection, we do not need cronyism. There is a difference. At the very least, the difference is that protection is something you give to an industry, cronyism is something you give to an individual. That is very clear in the case of PAL.

What PAL enjoys is not something other local airlines do. The privilege of flying in and out of Naia Terminal 2 is not something Cebu Pacific and Asian Spirit enjoy. It is something only PAL enjoys. The privilege of not paying landing fees in various local airports is not something Cebu Pacific and Asian Spirit enjoy. It is something only PAL enjoys. The privilege of having an air treaty with another country scrapped to benefit a local airline is not something Air Philippines, Cebu Pacific and Asian Spirit enjoy. It is something only PAL enjoys. There alone you see the hypocrisy of invoking nationalism as a ground to defend Tan.

There is a difference as well between protection and cronyism in that in protection, you play by the rules however the rules give you an advantage. In cronyism you change the rules each time you start losing the game even with that advantage. That was clearly what Erap's decision to scrap the air treaties with Taiwan was all about, an arm-twisting tactic that drove the airlines' association, which has had its headquarters here for longer than anyone can remember, to relocate elsewhere. That was what made the whole thing disgusting, not the privileges Tan already enjoyed but the fact that he could get Erap to change the rules anytime he needed, or wanted, to. No rules, no nothing. And that was exactly what we got, nothing.

That brings us to the part about the duration of protection. You can't have indefinite protection. Protection makes sense only if it is used to grow strong enough to not need it in time. Preferably, a not very long time. The people who argue against protectionism as an encouragement to perpetual infantilism have a point, but only if the protection lasts indefinitely.

It hasn't in other countries, though we'd be fools to imagine protectionism has completely disappeared from them. Another letter-writer, Philip Quigley, hits the nail on the head when he says: "All the great economic powers protected their core industries while growing. The United States was very protectionist, and still is in many sectors of the economy. The free trade propaganda is only for foreign consumption."

But it's true also that foreign industries use their period of protection to produce a leading world product. And then they demand open trade, or indeed open skies, in the case of aviation. That is a crucial difference. Elsewhere protection is a reason to exert oneself to become world-class. Here, it is an excuse to lapse into smugness and become parochial. Elsewhere, protection is a period, like childhood and adolescence, where industries learn skills and experience before going out into the world. Here, it is a period, like *hakuna matata*, where industries learn to not worry and be happy before going into a cocoon.

None of this refutes the need for a strong sense of country, or plain nationalism, which is, or should be, the linchpin of protectionism. In fact, it makes a strong case for it. The same need for consumers to profess a nationalist spirit by buying Filipino is the same need for producers to profess a nationalist spirit by producing the best that they can. It's that nationalist spirit that has compelled the industries of other countries to pursue excellence. It is where their sense of obligation to their consumers comes from. You don't produce the best that you can and the whole country gets a reputation for low standards. You don't do it and the whole country suffers.

I said before that the best protection for our industries is not high tariff walls and financial controls but national pride, or plain love of country, which should drive consumers to pick local products over foreign ones. Well, that is the best protection for consumers, too, national pride, or plain love of country. That is what should drive local producers to push themselves toward perfection. That is what should drive local producers to be the best in the world. They owe it to the people who patronize them to do so. They owe it to the country that nurtures them to do so. The news of the death of nationalism's relevance is grossly exaggerated. But I'll leave that for Independence Day next week.

The day Lucio Tan discovers that is the day I will defend him to the death. Otherwise, I don't care if the skies, open or closed, fall on him.

* * *

Comment to dequiros@vasia.com

The coup plot

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LIKE previous coup attempts in the Senate, rumors of an impending coup swirled around the chamber all week last week. The difference was that last Monday there was a confluence of events that convinced the plotters that it was the right time to pull it off. Especially since the absence of Sen. Ramon Revilla could muddle the issue of what constitutes a majority. Revilla's absence helped the opposition's strategy, but it lost them points with a public that was appalled that his colleagues would take advantage of his illness in the United States.

Moreover, the exhaustive 100-page report on the involvement of Sen. Panfilo Lacson and his men in drug-related activities drawn up by the committees on public order and blue ribbon was due anytime. The general perception was that this was a crucial factor in the coup's timing.

Yesterday Senate President Franklin Drilon and the "new minority" apologized to the Filipino people for the imbroglio that, they were quick to point out, they didn't start. With it came the pledge to seek a solution to the problem in the chamber.

Looking back, I note the Star's front-page story last Monday which said that the Palace and some Senate "allies" were concocting a plot to replace Senators Joker Arroyo, chair of the committee on public services and franchises handling the Transco issue, and Ralph Recto, chair of economic affairs, whose committee was handling the Special Purpose Asset Vehicles (SPAVs) bill. The story said that the Palace was dissatisfied with the slow pace of these committees and conspired to change the slowpokes with other senators who could speed them up, including opposition senators if necessary.

That story, however, does not make sense, for surely the Palace knows that a revamp, given the cast of Senate characters, could not be safely confined to just one or two committees.

Last Tuesday, May 28, Sen. John Osmeña continued to seethe with anger at Sen. Rene Cayetano for blocking his plan to summon former President Fidel V. Ramos before the committee on government corporations. He was heard telling reporters that Cayetano didn't realize he could have him ousted from the chairmanship of the energy committee. That boast got to opposition Sen. Tessie Oreta, his sparring partner during Estrada's presidency, who quickly called to verify his threat. Talk began to circulate about a coup plot afoot.

Interestingly, there were indications that Drilon was aware of a minority-instigated revamp at the committee level which would leave his post untouched. Osmeña and Drilon had lunch at the Westin Plaza last May 29, but Drilon later told the media it was to discuss only the SPAV bill and that Osmeña gave no hint whatsoever of what he was about to pull off. Drilon, however, was bothered enough to speak to one or two colleagues in the majority about the minority's moves. He doubtless knew that the minority didn't have the 13 votes needed to unseat him, but he also realized that with the revamp the minority aimed to reduce him to a puppet.

Meanwhile, Oreta invited Osmeña to further discuss his threat at dinner in her Makati residence last Sunday where the 10 other opposition members were present. They urged him not to limit the revamp to the committee. And they coaxed him to rejoin the group he had left after the May 1 uprising.

Over the weekend, the majority senators were anxiously in touch with one another and by Monday morning, June 2, everyone was in his office, waiting for a call to a caucus from Drilon. At around 1:30 p.m., Drilon had lunch with Majority Leader Loren Legarda, Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel and Sen. Edgardo Angara at his office to discuss the legislative agenda up to the June 6 adjournment. Legarda recalled later that Angara even asked that Senators Villar, Pangilinan and Arroyo interpellate him as chair of the committee on electoral amendments which was sponsoring the bill on absentee voting.

At some point during the lunch, Drilon confronted the two opposition leaders about a plot to oust him and they assured him there was no such thing. By that time, however, Osmeña was already walking into Pimentel's office to sign the revamp resolution with the minority.

Pimentel and Angara returned to Drilon's office a few minutes later, armed with the revamp resolution. Drilon told them he would not call the session, to which the two replied that they would do so. Drilon replied, "We cannot prevent you from doing that. That is your privilege." But he added that the majority did not believe such a session would be valid.

At 3 p.m., as the new minority rushed to Drilon's office for a frantic caucus, the new majority held their rump session. They suspended Senate Rule No. 6 which stipulates that the authority to call a session lies with the Senate president, or in his absence, the hierarchy down the line, which does not include the minority leader. Moreover, in electing Senators Blas Ople as president pro tempore and Pimentel as majority leader, they also suspended Rule 2, which stipulates that the officers of the Senate shall be elected by the majority vote of all its members.

In Tuesday's rump session, I queried Osmeña what made him switch sides, and he cited his resentment over Cayetano's move to block Ramos' appearance before his committee. Cayetano claims, however, that the majority had already agreed to it much earlier. Osmeña also mentioned President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's "lack of sensitivity" to his feelings by appointing as assistant secretary at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Raymond Mendoza, the son of "my mortal enemy of 40 years" in Cebu, labor leader Democrito Mendoza.

Drilon has not shown any sign that he was hurt by the actions of his friend, but colleagues say he never thought Osmeña would turn against him.

Catholic hospitals and 'EC'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

BY WAY of an addendum to yesterday's column on "alternative EC," a website on emergency contraception, "not-2-late.com," provides this answer to a query on whether emergency contraception can be provided in Catholic hospitals.

Catholic hospitals in the United States are governed by the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, issued by the US bishops in 1994, says the information. "Women whose contraception has failed during consensual intercourse usually cannot receive emergency contraception in Catholic hospitals. The Directives, however, do treat emergency contraception after rape differently from abortion, sterilization and contraception for family planning. Directive No. 36 states that 'compassionate and understanding care should be given to a person who is the victim of sexual assault. Health care providers should cooperate with law enforcement officials, offer the person psychological and spiritual support, and accurate medical information.'"

There seems to be some leeway for Catholic hospitals to attempt to prevent conception in the case of rape. Directive No. 36 states that "If, after appropriate testing, there is no evidence that conception has occurred already, she may be treated with medications that would prevent ovulation, sperm capacitation or fertilization. It is not permissible, however, to initiate or to recommend treatments that have as their purpose or direct effect the removal, destruction, or interference with the implantation of a fertilized ovum."

The source of the information, the book "Caution: Catholic Health Restrictions May be Hazardous to Your Health" published by Catholics for a Free Choice, notes that "the directives do not specify how to determine whether conception has occurred, leaving Catholic hospitals to interpret when they may provide emergency contraception."

* * *

I'M not aware of any such "directives" issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the policies to be followed by Catholic hospitals. I do remember seeing, though, a sign in the emergency room of one Catholic hospital warning women that "abortion is a crime under Philippine law, and so in accordance with the law, we will report any woman who is brought to this hospital showing signs that she has undergone or has attempted an illegal abortion."

A friend of mine, a woman doctor, once told me of the time she had to rush a neighbor, who had come to her for help after an abortion, to the same hospital for treatment. She loaded the woman into a taxi and rushed her to the nearest hospital. But when the emergency room personnel were told that the patient was suffering from the consequences of a botched abortion, they refused outright to take her in. "So I had to call another taxi, load the woman into it, and bring her to a government hospital," my friend recalls. "We reached it just in the nick of time, but the woman was already near-death. The delay in treatment very nearly cost her life. If she had died, I would have sued that hospital!"

* * *

ABORTION is very much a public health issue in this country. With an estimated 200,000 to 500,000 abortions performed here a year, we have an abortion rate slightly higher than in the United States, where the procedure is legal.

Because induced abortion is illegal in this country, it is usually unsafe, being clandestine, unregulated and often performed by untrained practitioners, if not by the women themselves. So managing the consequences of botched abortions, which range from sepsis or widespread infection, to uncontrolled bleeding or even perforation of the uterus, is a big challenge to government hospitals. In fact, it constitutes the biggest expense item of maternity wards of government hospitals.

It's a mystery, then, why the Department of Health, which says one of the goals of its family planning program is to reduce the number of abortions, would ban Postinor that precisely helps prevent unwanted pregnancies through emergency contraception.

Or why groups allied with the Catholic Church would have lobbied for the banning of Postinor when I'm sure they're fully aware that, having been denied any form of emergency contraception, a woman who finds out she has gotten pregnant after a rape, would consider an abortion next. Unless, of course, they believe any woman who's had unprotected sex, even if it was forced on her, has no choice but to get pregnant as a result.

* * *

BACK to the Catholic hospitals. Former Health Secretary Alberto Romualdez tells me of a "funny" policy practiced by Catholic doctors in Catholic hospitals. Because hospital policies do not allow for permanent sterilization through tubal ligation, doctors are caught in a dilemma when confronted with cases of women who clearly cannot risk another pregnancy. But instead of performing a tubal ligation, some doctors choose instead to perform what is known as a "partial hysterectomy," removing the woman's uterus but keeping her cervix intact.

Clearly, the hysterectomy, although partial, is a far more serious and invasive procedure than a tubal ligation which would have achieved the same ends. But what is a woman's life and health compared to hospital policy?

Even "funnier" is the practice of some conservative doctors who consent to open up a woman whose condition calls for a tubal ligation only to leave her at the operating table, assigning a resident, instead, to perform the procedure. Thus do some doctors observe the "correct" Catholic dictum and salve their consciences, while forgetting the ethics of the healing profession that requires them, to "first, do no harm."

From Rio to Johannesburg

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

YESTERDAY was World Environment Day. How many remembered? How many senators knew or remembered?

It has been 10 years since the Earth Summit in Rio. This August, the United Nations will again host a global gathering called the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This time it will be in Johannesburg. This will be a chance for world leaders to forge a new deal for an economically, socially and environmental sustainable world.

The environment could have been much worse without Rio in 1992. Awareness has grown since then, but things are far from ideal. The divide between the rich and the poor has not narrowed, a factor that adds pressure to the world's natural systems.

The Worldwatch Institute, a non-profit independent environmental research organization, has been issuing briefs as part of activities that lead up to Johannesburg and would want these disseminated. One of these describes the key lessons learned over the past decade. Here are some.

Climate change. *What the world learned:* In 1996 a UN scientific panel reported that a "discernible human influence" was evidence of a changing global climate. By 2001 the group said that "most of the observed warming over the last 50 years is likely to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations."

What goals were set: In Rio, 170 nations agreed to voluntary reductions of greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels. By mid-decade, there were negotiations for 6 to 8 percent below 1990 levels. This led to the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. A UN climate panel said climate stabilization would require 60 to 80 percent reduction of gas emissions.

What happened: Carbon emissions globally increased by 9 percent between 1992 and 2001. This increased by 18 percent in the United States. The US withdrawal from the protocol in 2001 and President George Bush's 2002 decision to rely on voluntary, efficiency-driven measures to control emissions will likely result in further increases in US emissions by 2010.

Species loss. *What the world learned:* The World Conservation Union "Red List" surveys reported in 1995 that 13 percent of fish, 11 percent of mammals, 10 percent of amphibians, 8 percent of reptiles and 4 percent of birds, were in immediate danger of extinction. Species losses, estimated at 100 to 1,000 times the preindustrial rate, led biologists in the 1990s to describe contemporary times as an era of mass extinction, the first in 65 million years. The leading cause was habitat reduction.

What goals were set: Over the decade 182 countries became parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and promised to abide by guidelines for biodiversity protection.

What happened: The two richest sources of biodiversity—forests and coral reefs—suffered damage in the 1990s. Forested area contracted by 2.2 percent. But the area of coral reefs regarded as seriously degraded rose from 10 percent in 1992 to 27 percent in 2000. Only 38 percent of parties to the Biodiversity Convention has submitted national conservation strategies.

Water scarcity. *What the world learned:* Policymakers and activists questioned the heavy dependence on dams, irrigation canals and other large water supply projects. In their place, researchers developed the concept of integrated water management, thus giving water its proper cultural, economic and environmental value.

What goals were set: Agenda 21, the action plan from the 1992 Earth Summit, along with declarations from the 1994 and 1998 UN meetings, all called for the adoption of integrated water management and greater attention on the poor.

What happened: Advances in providing access to clean water and sanitation were impressive in absolute terms but barely kept pace with population growth. More than 1.1 billion people still lack access to clean drinking water. Water is still widely mismanaged. Aquifers, for example, are overpumped in major farming regions so that sustained production of as much as 10 percent of the global grain supply is now at risk. A growing number of major rivers, including the Yellow, Indus, Ganges and Colorado, now run dry at some point each year.

Consume and dispose economies. *What the world learned:* Global consumption of metals, minerals, wood, plastic and other materials increased some 2.4-fold between 1990 and 1995. The "ecological footprint," a conceptual tool that emerged at mid-decade to provide a rough measure of the impact of consumption of materials, food and fuel, showed that **three** Earths would be needed to sustain the entire world at an American level of consumption.

What goals were set: Researchers proposed cost-effective strategies for reducing materials use by up to 90 percent in industrial countries. Suggestions included reusing factory wastes, designing durables such as copiers and cars to be remanufactured, holding manufacturers responsible for the materials they send into the world, meeting consumer needs with services such as mass transit instead of cars.

What happened: Recycling rates increased for household disposables in many countries, but stagnated at 30 to 50 percent in industrial countries. Declines in materials use per person and in materials needed to produce a dollar in GNP, were encouraging, but total materials use and extraction of virgin materials continued to climb. A treaty to eliminate use of 10 toxic, long-lived chemicals, and to reduce emissions of two industrial byproducts, was completed in 2001, but is not yet enforced.

Happy World Environment Day, Earthlians!

Last hit

YOUNGBLOOD

Alegria Dolor

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

LOVE hit me when I least expected it. I had just broken off with my first boyfriend and wasn't really looking for a new "special someone" when I met the great love of my life. I met him at the school library where I spent most of my days, reading and studying for the classes ahead. It was one of those moments when a guy would suddenly smile and look a girl straight in the eyes and then the girl would be surprised, blush and smile back.

I saw in him the exact opposite of my ex. He is never shy. He tells me how he feels about me, about us. He is thoughtful and caring. He reminds me to eat lunch or to sleep early. He never forgets the little things that matter so much to me. On special days, he offers me white tulips. He is demonstrative and likes to shout out loud how much he cares for me. He is passionate about life and is determined to reach his dreams.

We were having dinner when he popped the question, "Do you love me?" without even declaring that he loved me first. To be honest, I knew that I loved him even before he asked.

My world began to revolve around him and only him. We spent every moment we could manage with each other. We studied together, ate together, watched movies together. We hunted for our favorite books together. We began doing everything together and inevitably we became one.

Months passed, and love hit me when I least expected it. It hit me with some painful words. The great love of my life began saying cruel and spiteful words to me like "*Malas ka sa buhay ko.*" Or, very painfully for me, "*Wala akong pakialam kahit magpakamatay ka pa.*"

Love hit me when I least expected it. It hit me when I made him wait in his car for five minutes. It hit me when I didn't follow his instructions to the letter. It hit me when I didn't understand what he said. It hit me when his day was not going well and mine was.

The great love of my life hit me more than once and for the flimsiest of reasons. He justified the "episodes" by saying I deserved it and that he wanted a partner he could control.

And I actually believed him. I actually believed that if I wanted to become his wife, I should be under his absolute control; that if I wanted to be happy, I should believe every word he said. So, I accepted love's hits in silence. I thought of them as "*cariño*" or mad, passionate love even, because after he hit me, he would kiss me and say he never meant to hurt me and that it would never happen again. I always believed him and his sweet promises.

Until one day, when love hit me once more when I least expected it—this time, not on my legs but right on my face. He hit me before I even knew he was mad. And he hit me so hard, my right earring fell off.

I begged him to stop because I could already taste blood. But he stopped only after I couldn't count how many times he hit me anymore.

When he drove me home, he didn't even bother to ask how I felt. Minutes later, he sent me a text message. I expected to read his promises again, but all he asked was if my parents or anybody else noticed my swollen face. He showed no sign of remorse. He believed I deserved every single blow I received.

On that unexpected day, I finally told myself that love hit me for the last time.

Alegria Dolor, 26, works in a big firm based in Makati and describes herself now as a man-hater.

Finders keepers

Maverick

I'M pretty, I'm sexy, I'm smart, I'm funny, I'm a certified head-turner and I don't have a boyfriend. I must be insane.

It's not that I've never been attached. I am 23, and I've had boyfriends in the past. But none of them seemed worth spending the rest of my life with. Even my first love, who was the most loyal, the most caring and definitely the best of them all, and to whom I was engaged, was unfortunately below my level—intellectually.

What I need is someone who can make me laugh but who can cry with me too; who would know me inside-out but would love me just the same; someone who's smart enough to challenge my brain but crazy enough to fall in love with me; someone who's incurably romantic but not addicted to sex. Someone taller, more mature, aesthetically pleasant, musically inclined, fluent in oral and written English, financially secure, emotionally stable, physically fit and well-educated. No experience necessary. Someone who's not given to jealousy. Someone who's not chauvinistic and therefore willing to share in household chores. Someone who doesn't manipulate people. Someone my mother would love.

I'm not asking for too much. It's just that I've been around and I know how the world works. I've gotten hurt a few times after falling for men who were total losers. My fault, so no hard feelings. Now I'm through fooling around. No more flings. Just plain, uncomplicated, extraordinary love. With someone who could love me (and **only** me!) in the same intense and devoted way I love him.

Am I asking for a saint? No, I'm just asking for someone I would never tire of, someone to spend the rest of my life with. Forever.

Impossible? Not at all; I see a few prospects every day. My problem is, I mustn't make the first move. I mean I can, but I shouldn't. Society frowns upon that. *Hirap maging babae!*

Right now there is one guy I'm willing to risk falling in love with. Just seeing him smile makes me feel like a chocolate marshmallow in the middle of a nuclear meltdown. I am just waiting for a sign that the attraction is mutual. But I don't even know if he likes me. He can't even remember my nickname! Absolutely pathetic.

Give it time, you say. Sure, I've all the time in the world. The problem is the place. You see, my contract in the institution he works in has just expired. So I no longer have any excuse for being there.

Here I am, sitting all alone in an empty house, no job, no salary, no one to talk to, at least until I get another job. And the man of my dreams? He's too busy checking papers to even remember me. (Yeah, he's a teacher; and I am too—or was.) Twice I sent him text messages and he replied, "Who you?" The darling didn't even save my number in his phonebook!

My friends tell me to be careful lest I wind up frustrated again. But I've always been a risk-taker, and I'm never giving up on love. After the frustrations in the past, I could have become a cynic, but the incurably romantic side of me just refuses to die.

I'm not in love with him—not yet, anyway. I don't know enough about him to convince myself that I have fallen in love. But I know myself, and I know for a fact that he is the kind of man I've been looking for. Or dying for. Or starving for. Whatever. Oh, what will I do to get his attention? (I don't think dancing the Tahitian on top of his computer would be quite appropriate. It will surely catch his attention but he might sue me for "destroying school property.")

I know someday I will find my match, the future father of my children, my worthy other half, the One. For all I know, I may have found him already. I just hope he will find me, too. In which case, I will make sure it will be finders keepers!

Maverick, 23, is self-proclaimed mental case.

Police prejudice against Muslims

RECENTLY the newspapers devoted valuable space to news about Muslim schools or *madrasahs* allegedly being used as terrorist training camps.

The Philippine National Police is agitated over the reports coming from the field that "the goal is to make Islam the dominant religion in Christian Philippines." The same "fear" was expressed by Gen. Robert Delfin when he announced on TV that the "*balik*-Islam (converts) are more dangerous because they are more aggressive. The *balik*-Islam movement is out to convert the Filipinos to become Muslim terrorists, and the *madrasahs* are being used for the purpose."

The prejudices and biases of officials in our law enforcement agencies are obvious from these actuations. Such statements underscore their lack of understanding of what constitutes terrorism, terrorist and jihad, and their lack of knowledge of a basic constitutional right: the freedom of religion.

The PNP which arrested the six students in Pangasinan admitted to the absence of an anti-terrorism law, which means it has no basis for branding the students or anyone, for that matter, as "terrorists" since they do not know the parameters of its meaning.

The absence of a legally prescribed definition of "terrorism," which falls within the ambit of the standard set by the UN General Assembly, has opened the door wide open for indiscriminate labeling of innocent civilians as terrorists, aided by evidence of paraphernalia and arms, which, in many cases, are planted to reinforce the stereotype of terrorists. This unduly subjects innocent civilians to baseless police action and prosecution.

Also, "*jihad*" does not mean change through violent means. Islam stands for peace and for peaceful and gradual transformation of situations and of people consistent with progress and development.

Finally, there is a clear misconception about the propagation of religious faith. In the Philippines, there are a number of denominations hoping to cultivate and "harvest" followers to their respective faiths through media campaigns and massive rallies. However, when similar preparations are carried out by Muslims to promote Islam, the PNP and the military are immediately rattled and arrests are made.

This government reaction is obviously consistent with what Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" has sought to foment through the CIA and other US security agencies, refusing to recognize that Islam and Christianity are both anchored on the same principle of monotheism—or the idea of one God.

This common or shared belief in one God, whether called "God" or "Allah" should serve to bind Christians and Muslims in mutual tolerance, understanding and cooperation. It should not create room for suspicion and distrust which lead to religious persecution such as what we are now experiencing.

—FATEMAH REMEDIOS C. BALBIN, chair and president, Foundation for Social Justice, 6/F Tempus Place II Condominium, Matalino Street, Diliman, Quezon City

LETTERS

Idle talk

KINDLY permit me to comment on the story baring the "Pampnga arrangement" last May 26. It is sad that the entire story was based on a source who did not wish to be named. Most of the issues were based upon loose, highly speculative and partisan talk—the kind of unverified information that the INQUIRER should be wary of.

If there is one thing that is settled, it is that Rep. Oscar Rodriguez, since he became a public servant in 1987, will continue to maintain a strong sense of accountability to the republic and to his numerous constituents in Pampanga. Consequently, he will continue to legislate, attend sessions and perform all the other important functions of a three-term congressman.

Anything else related to the so-called "arrangement" is idle talk and a waste of time.

—WITO D. BAUTISTA, Rm. 206, North Wing Bldg., House of Representatives, Batasan Complex, Quezon City

When nurses leave

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THESE days the newspapers are full of advertisements offering overseas jobs to our nurses. The demand is so great that even physicians are going to nursing school because it's easier to get that overseas job as a nurse.

I don't know how many nurses have left in this latest brain drain. Last week, a BBC newscast said that in the year 2001, Britain took in 13,721 nurses who received their training outside of the European Union. The Philippines provided 7,235 of those nurses.

If we sent so many nurses to the United Kingdom then there must have been many more who left for the United States, where there is a tremendous shortage of nurses. The American Hospital Association says that there are 126,000 vacancies, with the demand increasing as baby boomers begin to age. (The baby boomers were those born shortly after World War II.)

It seems that in Britain and the States, nursing is not a popular profession, with its long work hours for pay that is considered low, with new nurses starting with salaries between $25,000 to $30,000 a year.

That may be on the low end of the wage spectrum for Americans but it is a large amount for Filipinos. After all, $25,000 comes out to P1.2 million. Compare that to the minimum wage, which is what many private hospitals pay our nurses. At most, a new nurse would get about P90,000 a year. No wonder nursing education is considered an investment, with high returns here.

The Americans are worried. This week the New England Journal of Medicine published the results of a study conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health, looking into the relationship between nurse staffing and patient care. They found that in hospitals with a shortage of nurses, patients were more likely to suffer from complications, like urinary infections and pneumonia, and to be confined longer (because recovery is slowed down).

Nurses play many vital roles in health care, especially in the hospital. Even tasks that seem menial can be life-saving. For example, pneumonia and blood clots, which are common complications that relate to the patient's immobility, are prevented when there are enough nurses to turn and reposition bedridden patients. Those complications are also prevented when patients are exercised, encouraged to walk around and even to cough. You'd be surprised but patients sometimes have to be taught and encouraged, to cough. Nurses are great with this.

Nurses provide an early warning system, catching signs of possible complications as they make their rounds. Common but life-threatening conditions that need to be detected quickly include pneumonia, shock, cardiac arrest, gastrointestinal bleeding. The Harvard study found that in hospitals poorly staffed with nurses, the death rate was 2.5 percent higher for these diseases than in cases where there were enough nurses.

Reading all these reports made me wonder if we are conscious about our own nursing shortage, and its consequences. In the Philippines, nurses play even more crucial roles than in the United States or United Kingdom. Besides "manning" our hospitals, the nurses are at the frontlines of our health care system, managing government health centers such as rural health units. These health centers provide basic but vital services such as immunization, family planning and health education. Well-trained nurses provide many more services, sometimes ending up as the doctor for the entire municipality.

I am particularly concerned about the lack of continuity for nursing training. I hear of many older and experienced nurses leaving for the States, where they can get as much as $60,000 a year. This means our nursing schools are left to young instructors with little experience and knowledge to pass on. In hospitals, too, new nursing graduates end up with few of the older mentors.

When you think about it, many of the nurses in our hospitals are there only to get some clinical experience so they can apply for the job overseas. In effect, the nation's entire health care system becomes one training institution to prepare Filipino nurses for overseas work.

We have to think of other ways of meeting the demands for human resources in health. I don't think we can ever raise nurses' salaries to a rate high enough to compete with overseas salaries but we can offer other incentives, such as better working conditions.

Responding to the nursing shortage also means looking at how we can strengthen the other health professions. We need to look into training more paramedics and medical aides. In the States, these professionals play important roles as well in hospitals, especially in emergency wards. And in non-hospital settings, we need to look at community health workers, mobilizing people to take responsibilities for basic health care.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

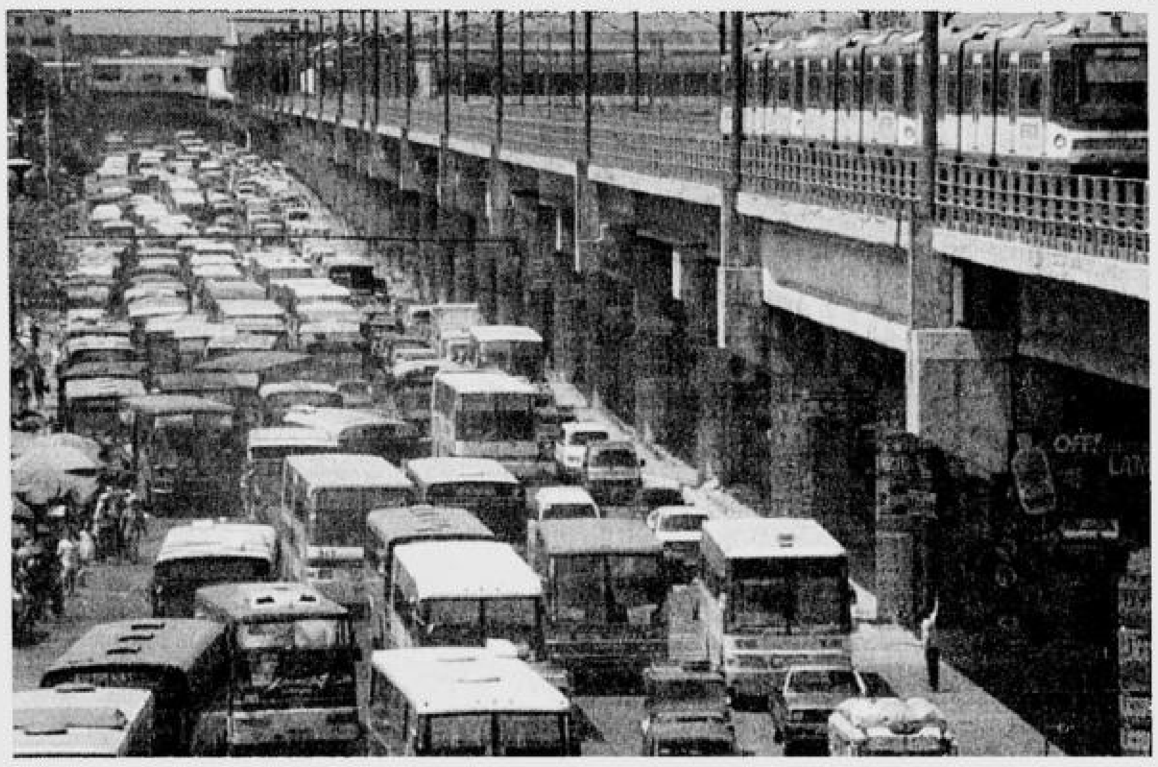
Happy with 'colorum' buses

A RECENT news item said that according to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, among the 5,000 buses plying Edsa, only 3,000 have franchises to operate, and the 2,000 illegal ones are apprehended and impounded by the police but manage to get back to Edsa just hours later after their operators pay P6,000 in fines.

If this report is accurate, then the government collects P12 million a day for fines, or P360 million in a month's time.

With this much monthly revenue from fines, should we not be happy with the 2,000 buses illegally plying the Edsa route?

—T.B. ABAYAN, 13-A Banning St., North Fairview, Quezon City



Senate did a good job with bill on Muslim holidays

THIS refers to the bill declaring the Muslim holidays of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha as national holidays about which Belinda Olivares-Cunanan has written in her column. As secretary general of the Philippine Islamic Council, an umbrella organization of various Muslim groups, may I volunteer the following information so that your legion of readers can be enlightened further.

I have attended the Senate committee hearings on the bill as well as the second reading, and I can attest to the objective discussion of the issue by the senators, who were anchoring their arguments on reconciliation between Muslims and Christians of this country.

Majority Floor Leader Loren Legarda and the committee chair, Sen. Edgardo Angara, were very fair in handling the proceedings. In fact, two "apologies" were made during the second reading, and these were heard by the gallery, which included hundreds of Muslims: that of Sen. Juan Flavier for violating "the rule of non-voting during Thursdays" when he served as majority floor leader in lieu of Legarda who was then out of town, and the other by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel for raising his voice while emphatically moving for the reconsideration of the amendments and wrongfully blaming Legarda for the "mess" created by Flavier.

It is true that Legarda has initiated several projects for the Muslims, but we must also mention that her projects and services have actually benefited all Filipinos, including, among others, the release of the NPA/Abu Sayyaf captives, Libro ni Loren Project and Luntiang Pilipinas.

Aside from the "Muslim-Christian reconciliation objective" of the bill, let us take note that countries with multi-religious and multi-cultural populations also celebrate both Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha as national holidays, together with the Christian, Buddhist and Hindu holidays. I refer in particular to Singapore, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Our present practice of celebrating only Christian holidays makes the Philippines the "odd man" in Asia. And this may explain partly the difficulty in bridging the gap between the Muslims and the Christians in the country.

Regarding the adverse effect on economic productivity of the increasing number of holidays in the Philippines, from 10 to 12 if both Muslim holidays are approved, let me point out that many progressive countries have more holidays, such as Hong Kong (17), South Korea (16), Taiwan (18), France (17), Malaysia (16), and India (29). This shows that economic productivity is enhanced by an environment of peace in a country.

Let me close by saying that the Muslim community is thankful to all senators, especially Senators Legarda, Angara and the other sponsors, for the approval of the bill.

We also thank you for writing about the issue since it made people aware of the measures being undertaken by our government in behalf of the Muslims in the Philippines.

—TAHA M. BASMAN, secretary general, Philippine Islamic Council, Cottage 4, Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila

No compromise on illegal drugs

THIS is in response to the rather lengthy letter last May 16 of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo, denouncing the raid conducted on suspected lairs of illegal drugs in Subic.

Payumo himself admitted that the law enforcers had a warrant of arrest. Thus, it was a legitimate operation, and whoever tipped off the police should be commended for his courage and concern over the ever increasing drug problem in this country. The police officers should likewise be commended for doing their job.

The quantity of shabu confiscated is beside the point. What is important is that members of the Narcgroup were able to find traces of the illegal drug in the location pinpointed by the informer. The task of getting a reliable informant, obtaining a search warrant from a reputable judge and conducting a raid is not very easy.

For somebody in Payumo's position, there is no choice but to cooperate with the law enforcers. He may denounce endlessly the havoc drugs wreak in our society but his letter puts his statements in doubt. In the fight against illegal drugs, political personalities like Payumo should not be caught in the gray area. No compromises should be made in an issue where the future of the Filipino youth is at stake.

Furthermore, to save Payumo from getting fits of paranoia with regard to the Olongapo City government's participation in the raids, let me assure him that the Olongapo leadership cannot dictate to the Narcgroup.

If he feels that his precious few investors' rights were violated, then he should complain to the proper authority. He is becoming an annoyance as far as the people of Olongapo are concerned because he keeps blaming Olongapo for all the miseries he suffers as SBMA chair. He need not look elsewhere. He only has himself to blame for failing to curb corruption, smuggling, drug-trafficking, prostitution, illegal logging, dynamite fishing and other illegal acts in Subic.

As for me, I don't need to call the media's attention to anything. Naturally the media would feast on anything that is newsworthy. It's their job.

By the way, does Payumo really believe that the US Marines who were in Subic at the time would attempt to intervene in the Philippine National Philippines' legitimate operation?

—MIKE F. PUSING, public information officer, Olongapo City

A deeply rooted faith and heritage

IN RESPONSE to the letter of Alfredo Velasco Jr. last May 15, allow me to present a more objective and clearer situationer on the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI).

It is not correct to say that the IFI is on a decline whether in terms of membership or in the pursuit of her mission and ministry. Today, the IFI still can count about six million members spread over 35 dioceses and more than 600 parishes throughout the country as well as our Diocese of USA and Canada. Thus, the IFI has reasons to be jubilant for despite the many problems caused by internal and external forces, it has persevered in preserving her institutional life and in pursuing her mission in the country and elsewhere, ever faithful and true to her heritage as the church of the Filipino working class. She has never wavered from or abandoned her pastoral and prophetic ministry even during the worst of times. And there is only one explanation to this: ours is a deeply rooted faith and heritage that have served as the strong and steady sail that enables the IFI to survive in its journey toward its first centenary on Aug. 3, 2002.

It is therefore inappropriate and misleading for Velasco to say that IFI members are ignorant of their rich historical heritage, for otherwise the IFI would have long disappeared from the face of the earth. The IFI was not born "out of the blue." As aptly articulated by our First Obispo Maximo, Most Rev. Gregorio L. Aglipay, "The Iglesia Filipina Independiente was founded by the people of our country. This is the product of their desire for liberty, religiously, politically and socially." Today, the IFI still harbors that burning desire.

The tasks and mission of the church is not simply to multiply its membership through "soul-saving" ministry or the construction of a state-of-the-art medical center, prestigious schools or high-rises, as Velasco suggests, to serve the least of our brethren: "Free the captives, feed the hungry, clothe the naked and proclaim the years of the Lord's favor" (Isaiah 61: 1-2a). This is our mission.

But discipleship is not as easy as drinking water and spitting out when the taste turns sour. This is the life and experience of the IFI. In her desire to be true and faithful to her calling and devotion, *pro Deo et patria*, she has to courageously undertake the arduous and oftentimes stormy journey especially amid some forces that since time immemorial do not look with favor on its nationalist and pro-people stand.

The tragic decision of the United States Supreme Court in 1906 was not merely coincidence. It was deliberately done to stifle dissent and suppress the Filipinos' desire for freedom and genuine independence. But thanks to the countless men and women, bishops and clergy who never hesitated to "cast their nets into the deep" and gladly shared of their own selves, the IFI has attained its present stature.

Nevertheless, I would like to thank Velasco for his advice to IFI members and invite him to join us in the historic IFI centennial celebration on Aug. 3. It is a celebration that will further edify the IFI faithful through a fuller grasp and understanding of the church's history, heritage, beliefs, doctrines and perspective.

—PETE M. PICO, national president, Laymen of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, 1500 Taft Ave., Ermita, Manila

A tiny increase in assets

THIS is to clarify the news report in the INQUIRER last May 24, on the statements of assets and liabilities (SAL) filed by members of the House of Representatives.

I would like to dispel any malice that the news article may have elicited, with the insinuation that I "entered the millionaires club" in my first year as a member of Congress. I would like to categorically state that Congress did not make me a millionaire. From a declared SAL of P1.585 million when I entered Congress in August of last year, my declared SAL for this year is P1.61 million.

There have been no drastic changes in my lifestyle since I became a member of Congress, except for some adjustments necessary so that I can perform my functions effectively. I continue to espouse and maintain the simple lifestyle that I have adopted from my days of activism with Gabriela.

—LIZA LARGOZA MAZA, party-list representative, Bayan Muna, South Wing, House of Representatives, Constitution Hills, Quezon City

Better date for Fil-Hispanic Day

I AM registering my objection to the proposal of 13 senators to declare June 30 as Fil-Hispanic Day to commemorate the so-called Siege of Baler from June 28, 1898 to June 2, 1899.

According to historian Carlos Quirino, that was the time when Filipinos tried to break Spanish morale by exhibiting women in lascivious postures and requiring a man and a woman to copulate in plain view of supposedly sex-starved Spanish troops garrisoned inside the Baler Catholic church. *Paano ba ito?*

May I suggest that Fil-Hispanic Day be commemorated instead on the date when the Spanish conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legaspi and the Visayan chieftain Sikatuna performed the Blood Compact or when the first natives led by King Humabon were baptized into Christianity.

Let the Siege of Baler remain a footnote of history. To highlight it is to remember the profanity of a man and a woman copulating in front of a church.

—AMADO B. NAVAL, Sison Street, Cabugao, Ilocos Sur

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US: Kuwaiti may have been 9/11 brains

WASHINGTON—Investigators believe they have identified a Kuwaiti lieutenant of Osama Bin Laden as the likely mastermind of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, a senior US counterterrorism official said.

Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, designated one of the FBI's most-wanted terrorists, is at large in Afghanistan or nearby, the law enforcement official said.

US investigators believe Mohammed planned many aspects of the Sept. 11 attacks, turning Bin Laden's calls for dead Americans into reality.

"There's lots of links that tie him to 9-11," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "He's the most significant operational player out there right now."

Other Bin Laden lieutenants are also believed to have helped put together the attacks, the official said. But evidence is mounting that Mohammed was at the center of the operational planning.

A second US official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that Mohammed played a critical role in planning the attacks but said questions remain about the extent of his leadership. The official said other Bin Laden lieutenants, including Abu Zubaydah, now in US custody, were also believed to have played top organizational roles.

According to the counterterrorism official, within three months of Sept. 11, the FBI learned that Mohammed had moved money that was used to pay for the attacks. Since then the United States has gathered other significant evidence pointing to him as the key planner. The official declined to go into detail, citing a need to protect intelligence information.

KHALID SHAIKH MOHAMMED

Mohammed is accused of working with Ramzi Yousef in the first bombing of the World Trade Center, which left six dead in 1993. He and Yousef, then hiding in the Philippines, also are accused of plotting in 1995 to bomb several trans-Pacific airliners heading for the United States. Yousef, now serving a life sentence in the United States, also is believed to have planned to crash a plane into CIA headquarters.

The state department is offering a $25-million reward for information leading to Mohammed's capture. Officials said he was continuing to plot attacks against US interests.

Mohammed was charged by federal prosecutors in New York in 1996 in connection with the alleged 1995 plot. The FBI describes him as in his mid-thirties, sometimes wearing a beard and glasses, and slightly overweight. His aliases include Ashraf Refaat Nabith Henin, Khalid Abdul Wadood, Salem Ali and Fahd Bin Abdallah Bin Khalid.

US officials have repeatedly said that capturing or killing Bin Laden's cadre of lieutenants—men like Mohammed—was a key goal in the war on terrorism. In some ways, they are considered as dangerous as Bin Laden: Where al-Qaida's leader serves as an inspiration to his followers, his top aides conduct the nuts-and-bolts planning of attacks.

The lieutenants are said to pick targets and attack dates, provide money and training to the foot soldiers and overseas cells chosen to carry them out—sometimes at the cost of their own lives—and maintain operational secrecy.

Most of the 19 suicide hijackers were thought not to have known the entirety of the Sept. 11 plot—or that they were going to die—but Mohammed apparently did, the counterterrorism official said.

Mohammed has not been charged in connection with the attacks, which crashed hijacked airliners into the World Trade Center and Pentagon, leaving more than 3,000 dead.

He was a close associate of Abu Zubaydah, officials said.

Some of the hijackers trained at Abu Zubaydah's Khalden camp in Afghanistan, officials said. Generally, though, the hijackers trained individually or groups of two at several camps, and they were kept apart from most other trainees.

Abu Zubaydah, captured in Pakistan in March, is said to have told US interrogators that the hijacked plane that crashed in Pennsylvania was destined for the White House, suggesting he knew of the planning. **AP**

SINO ANG MAY SALA?

MARCOS (1965-1986)

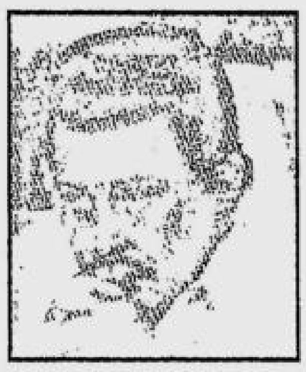
- Created the Department of Energy as a central agency to study, plan, and monitor the energy requirement of the country.
- Implemented the policy of synchronizing the supply of and demand for electricity to prevent wasted electricity.
- Adopted the policy of government monopoly on the generation of electricity, and only distribution was left to the private sector.
- Napocor bought the generation assets of Meralco and bailed out its foreign loans, paying the Lopezes a total of P1.9 billion.
- Tapped indigenous sources of energy like geothermal, hydro power and nuclear to reduce dependence on imported sources of energy.
- Established the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant to provide a cheaper source of electricity.
- Electric rates were fairly stable and reasonable, and the people did not complain.

AQUINO (1986-1992)

- Abolished the Department of Energy leaving the country with no central energy agency.
- Scrapped the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant project, which was intended to provide cheap electricity to the country, and yet the country is paying $200,000 per day to cover the interest for the construction of the plant.
- Returned Meralco to the Lopezes without any payment.
- Allowed Meralco, along with others, to have its own generation facilities.
- Issued Executive Order No. 215 allowing the private sector to engage in the generation of electricity. This began the influx of independent power producer (IPP) contracts for power generation.
- Signed 13 IPP contracts.
- Increased sales of generators as instant solution to the energy crisis.
- The public started to be angry and business began to complain because of the long brownouts (8-15 hrs a day).

RAMOS (1992-1998)

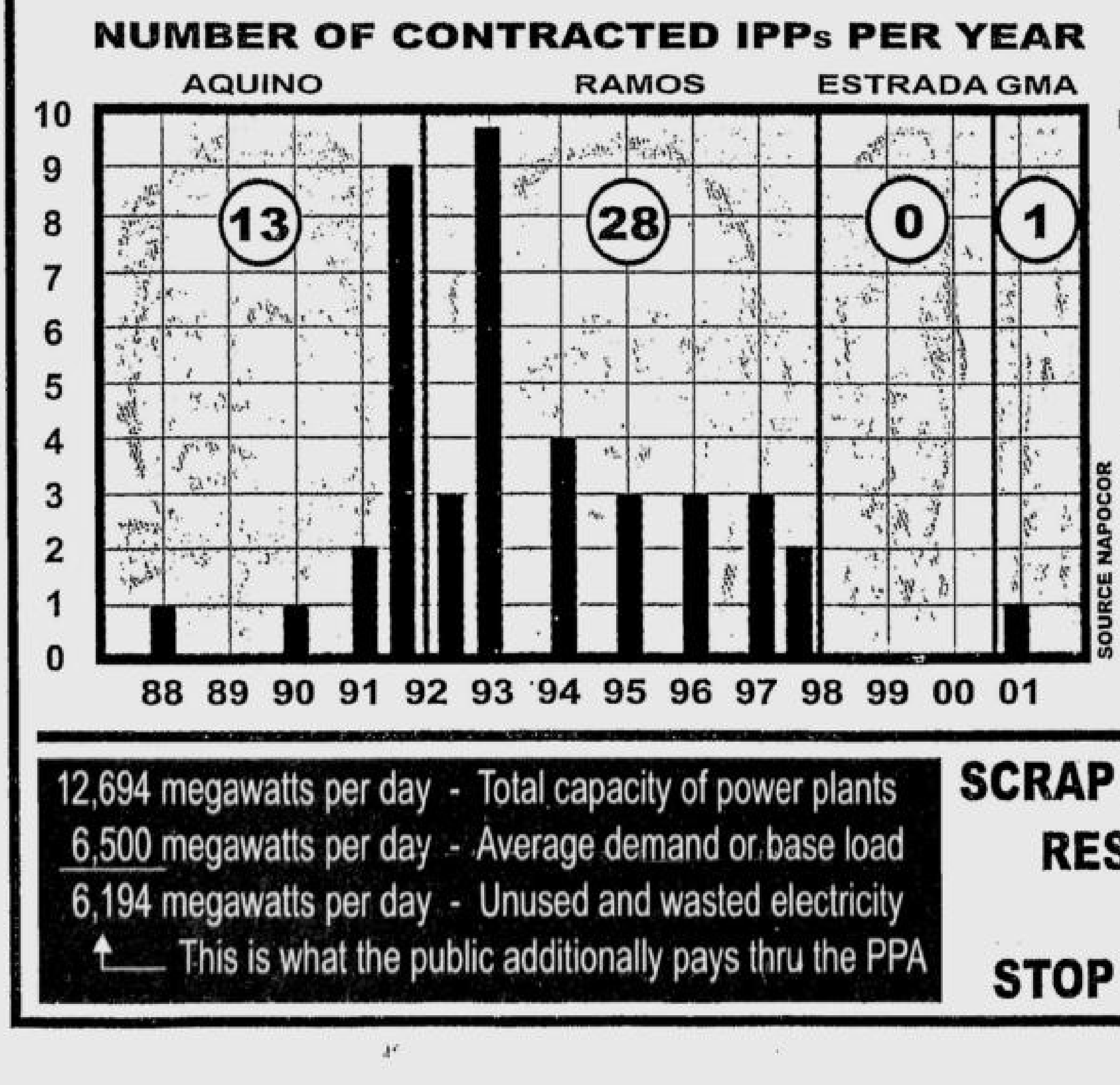
- Requested Congress for emergency powers to solve the energy crisis thru Republic Act No. 7648, The Power Crisis Act, giving him the authority to enter into negotiated contracts for the construction, repair, rehabilitation and maintenance of power projects.
- Entered into 10-25 years long-term IPP agreements almost all of which required Napocor to buy between 70%-85% of the rated capacity even if the electricity was not used by the public or delivered to it. Most of these agreements are alleged to be onerous.
- Continued to conclude IPP agreements despite World Bank's Philippine Power Sector Study of 1994 warning of 43% oversupply of electricity.
- Concluded 11 IPP contracts to solve prevailing crisis and another 11 IPP agreements for future electricity needs, and 5 despite apparent excess.
- Approved a total of 28 IPP contracts - 3 in 1992, 10 in 1993, 4 in 1994, 3 in 1995, 3 In 1996, 3 in 1997 & 2 in 1998.

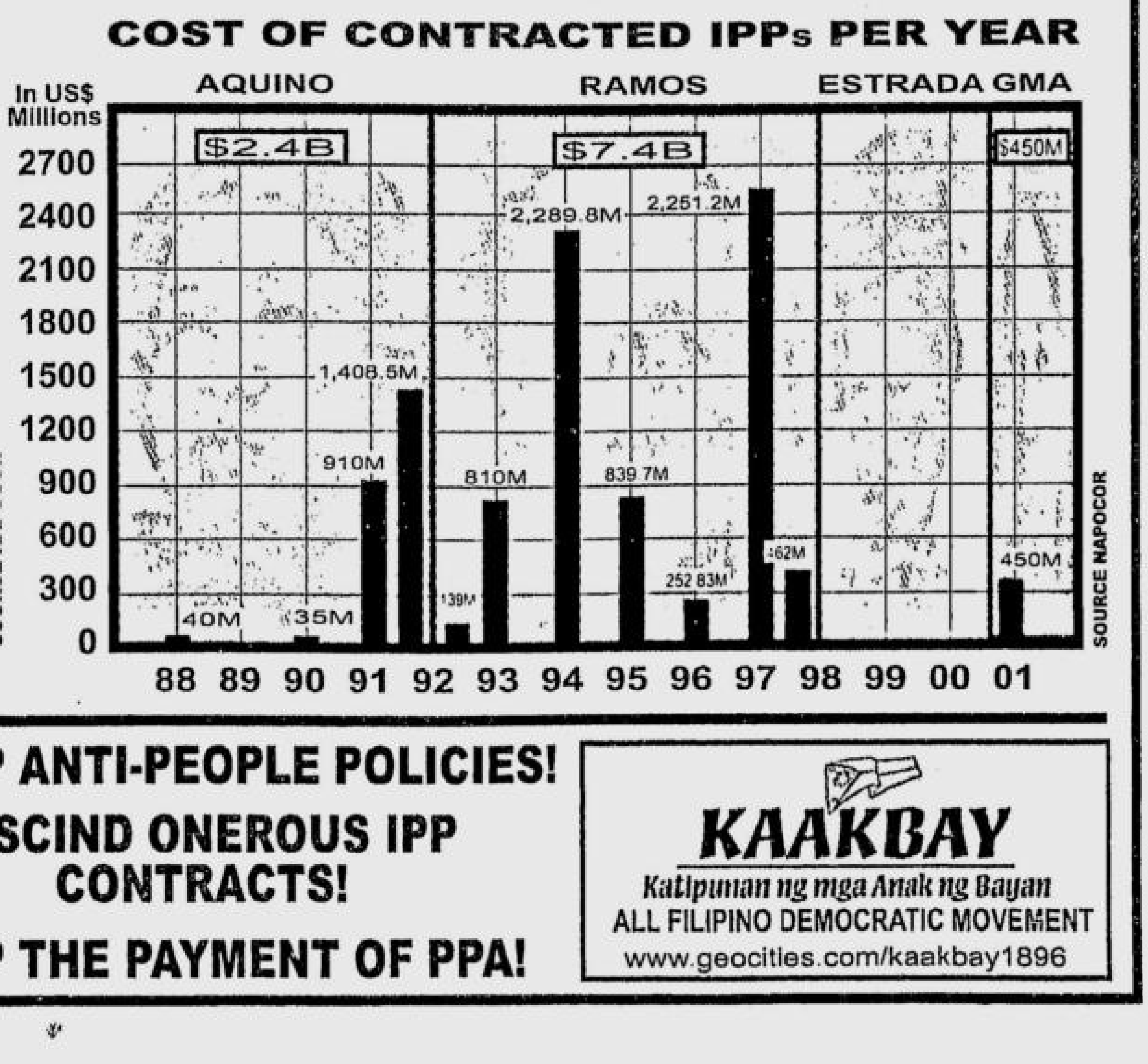

ESTRADA (1998-2001)

- Rejected the IMPSA request for sovereign guarantee to cover its IPP contract to operate another plant.
- Did not renew 7 independent power producers (IPP) contracts with 478 megawatts capacity to reduce the oversupply of electricity, earning the government some P2.77 billion.
- Pre-terminated 9 gas turbine power barges in 1999 despite having contract duration until 2003. These were auctioned and sold for $43.2 million as government earnings in addition to the annual savings of $23 million per year from 1999 up to 2003 should these barges have operated in their entire contract duration.
- Deferred for three years the commencement of 5 IPP contracts due to oversupply of electricity thereby providing savings of $411 million for the government.
- Has not signed any single IPP contract due to oversupply of electricity, refused to grant sovereign guarantees.

ARROYO (2001-2002)

- Instantly approved and provided government guarantee on the IMPSA IPP agreement to operate another plant just 4 days after assuming office.
- Pushed for the passage of Republic Act No. 9136, the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) which legitimized the imposition of various charges in the form of purchased power adjustments (PPA) or universal levy making the people pay for electricity they never used and making the cost of power exorbitant, and promised the electorate and the public that electricity cost would decrease.
- Proposes the suspension of PPA collection for the next 3 years to ease the people's burden. Shows the public that she can lower the cost of electricity from 2003 to 2005 so that the PPA would not be an issue on the 2004 elections, passing the problem to the next administration, a cover up to deceive the people and hinder the investigation of onerous IPP contracts.


NUMBER OF CONTRACTED IPPs PER YEAR


COST OF CONTRACTED IPPs PER YEAR

12,694 megawatts per day - Total capacity of power plants
6,500 megawatts per day - Average demand or base load
6,194 megawatts per day - Unused and wasted electricity
↑ This is what the public additionally pays thru the PPA

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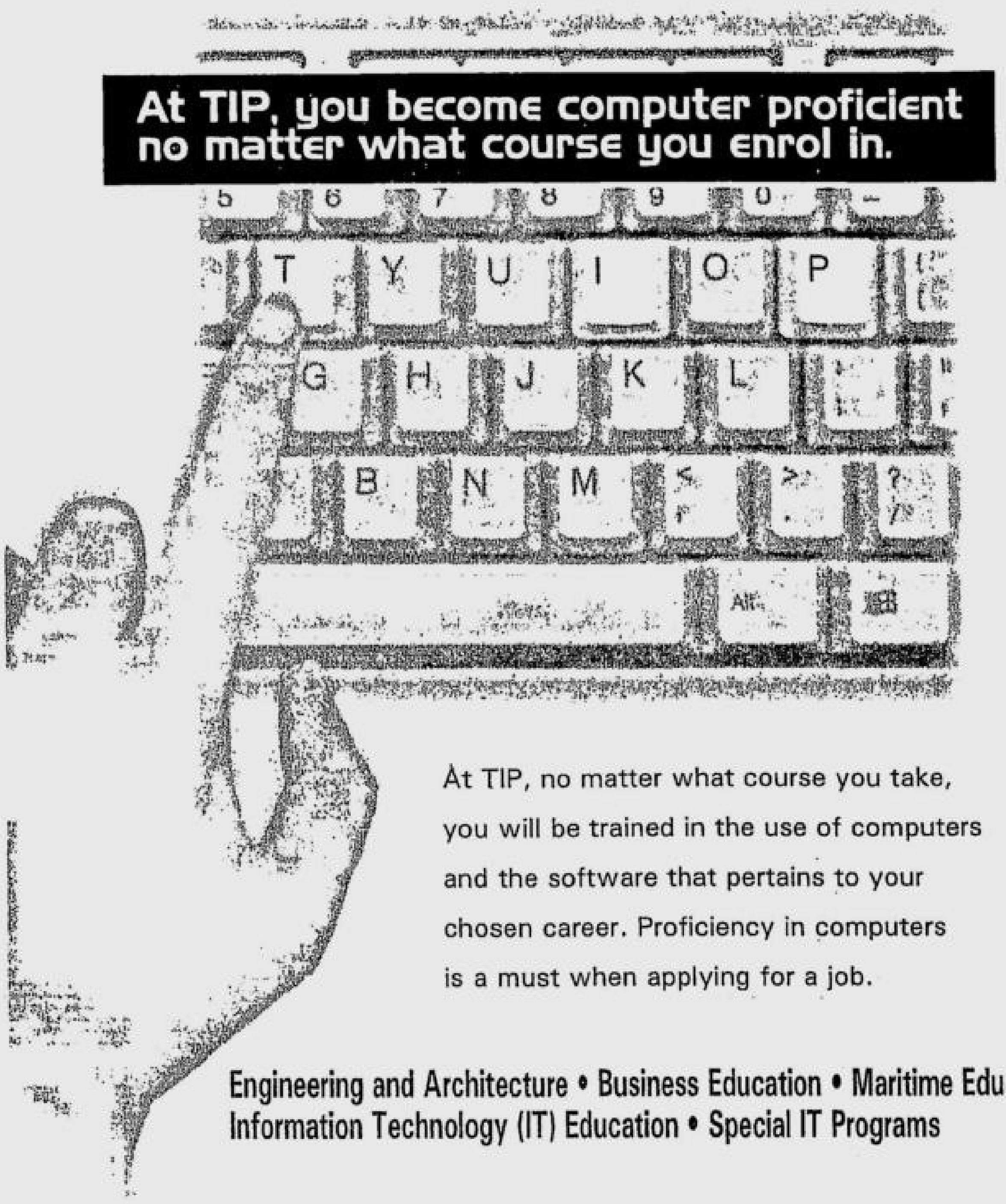
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Congress begins probe of CIA, FBI 9/11 failures

WASHINGTON—Behind closed doors and in a soundproof room, US lawmakers began a joint probe on Tuesday into the failure of US intelligence to thwart the Sept. 11 attacks, as President George W. Bush warned Congress not to hinder his war on terrorism.

After a moment of silence for the victims, members of the intelligence committees of the Senate and House of Representatives adopted an "initial scope of inquiry."

"We have now . . .laid the foundation and beginning tomorrow we will have staff briefings on the specific areas that we will be having detailed, witness-driven hearings on," Senate Intelligence Committee Chair Bob Graham, a Florida Democrat, announced following a three-hour opening session.

The "initial scope of inquiry" effectively states Congress wants answers to key questions: What did the FBI, CIA and other agencies know and when did they know it? What did they do about it? What have they learned since Sept. 11? What can be done to improve intelligence and better guard against another attack?

"We need to be aggressive and rigorous in these inquiries, asking the right questions—like who knew what and if they didn't know it why and what did they do with the information they had," said Sen. Barbara Mikulski, a Maryland Democrat.

Sen. Richard Shelby, ranking Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said in a public television interview: "We're going to get to the bottom of the problems in our intelligences agencies whatever it costs."

The FBI and CIA have come under fire after a string of disclosures that they failed to share information that could have warned of the attacks, and the Bush administration has been criticized for not being open enough about what it knew.

On Tuesday Bush said he was worried congressional probes might take government experts away from their job of preventing another attack.

"I want the Congress to investigate, but I want a committee to investigate, not multiple committees . . .because I don't want to tie up our team," Bush said.

The White House opposes mostly Democratic calls for a separate investigation by an independent commission, contending such a probe could become political and be less able to handle classified information. *Reuters*

US bishops propose penalties for priests who abuse minors

WASHINGTON—Besieged for months by a sex abuse scandal, US Roman Catholic Church leaders on Tuesday proposed measures to discipline priests who abuse minors, though they stopped short of advocating a widely sought zero-tolerance policy.

The proposals, drafted by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, are to be debated and voted on at a special bishops' meeting in Dallas, Texas, next week.

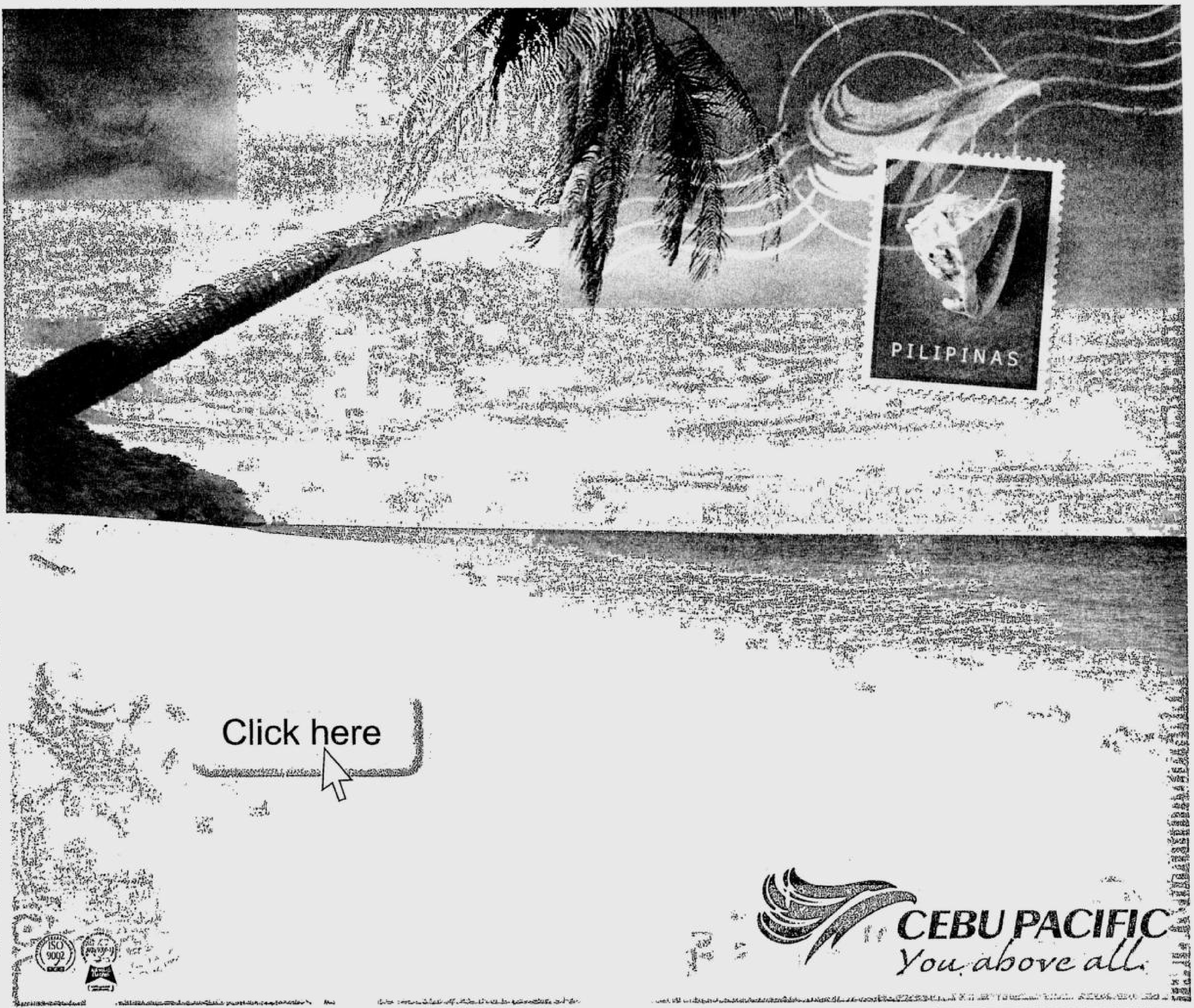
In the draft proposal, posted on the group's website, the bishops suggested that Pope John Paul II be asked to defrock any priest who commits any future sexual abuse of a minor, as well as any priest who has abused more than one child in the past.

"There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who would harm the young," the bishops said, recalling the 82-year-old Pontiff's remarks at an April meeting at the Vatican.

US dioceses should be required to report accusations of child sex abuse to civil authorities, and priests or other Church personnel accused of abuse should be removed from their posts while "credible allegations" are investigated, the bishops said.

Each diocese should convene a minimum five-person review board of lay people, a priest and at least one person with "particular expertise" in child sexual abuse issues to examine allegations of abuse, the bishops proposed. That review board will review the diocese's procedures for handling allegations and to advise bishops on offenders' fitness to remain in their posts.

However, to acknowledge the "power of conversion," priests who have abused a child once and received treatment but were never diagnosed as pedophiles could be allowed to continue in the ministry once their cases are examined by the review board. *AFP*



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Car bomb explodes near Israeli bus; 12 killed, 42 hurt

JERUSALEM—Twelve people were killed and more than 40 wounded when a car bomb exploded near a bus during the rush-hour in northern Israel early Wednesday, Israeli police said.

Three of the total 42 wounded were in critical condition, they said.

The early morning attack occurred at a crossroads in Meggido, near the port city of Haifa, in an area not far from the Palestinian town of Jenin in the West Bank, police said.

The attack comes amid US efforts to try to broker peace between Israel and the Palestinians, who have been embroiled in a bloody conflict since September 2000.

Shortly after the blast, a senior Israeli official accused Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat of encouraging "terrorist organizations" to pursue attacks against Israel.

Regional police chief Yaakov Boroski said that the explosion was caused by a car bomb near the bus that plied the route between Tel Aviv and Tiberias and which was full at the time of the attack.

Two months ago, a suicide bomber killed eight passengers as well as himself and wounded 20 in a blast on a bus near Haifa, Israeli medical sources said.

US CIA chief George Tenet is currently in the region, holding talks with Palestinian leaders on reforming the Palestinian security services, while US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs William Burns has been in Damascus and Beirut seeking support for a "three-track" US strategy for peace. *AFP*

Musharraf hints nuclear weapons could be used

ALMATY—After trading angry accusations with India's leader, seated at the same conference table, Pakistan's president said Tuesday that having atomic weapons implies they will be used—once again raising fears that the conflict over Kashmir could explode into a nuclear war.

Efforts by Russia, China and other regional nations failed to get Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to hold direct talks Tuesday. But Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed to see progress toward such negotiations, and Indian officials said they saw signs that the situation in Kashmir was becoming calmer.

In spite of the diplomatic maneuvering, some of the one million Indian and Pakistani soldiers posted along both sides of the 2,912-km frontier unleashed fresh artillery and gunfire at each other in Kashmir on Tuesday.

Pakistan reported that India shelled four sectors of Kashmir, killing one civilian and injuring nine. The Pakistani Army said it retaliated by destroying at least four Indian bunkers, causing some casualties among Indian soldiers.

In a speech at an Asian security conference both South Asian leaders attended, Putin likened the explosive impassé over the Himalayan province to the 1961 Cuban Missile Crisis, which put the world at risk of nuclear war. Today, as then, world leaders have to take responsibility to quash that risk, Putin said.

After holding separate talks with Musharraf and Vajpayee, Putin said he saw progress.

"In any case, both leaders expressed their interest in direct contacts, even though they still see the conditions for organizing such meetings differently, but both sides have the desire for such contacts," Putin told reporters after the meetings. *AP*

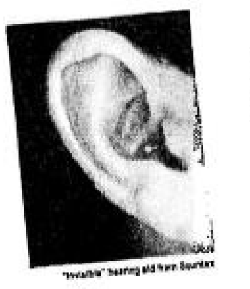
WORLDBRIEFS

Kim's son indicted

SEOUL—South Korean prosecutors indicted the youngest son of President Kim Dae-jung on charges of influence peddling and tax evasion in a blow to the 77-year-old leader as he basks in the World Cup limelight. An official at Seoul District Prosecutors Office said Kim Hong-gul, 38, was indicted for allegedly receiving 3.5 billion won ($2.90 million) in exchange for favors and evading taxes worth 225 million won on cash received from a businessman-lobbyist. The youngest of the president's three sons was arrested and detained in the middle of May, accused of receiving more than $2 million from a lobbyist-businessman who was trying to help a sports lottery firm set up operations for the World Cup soccer finals currently being played in South Korea and Japan. *Reuters*

Testicular cancer gene

WASHINGTON—An overactive gene that has been linked to testicular cancer could one day be monitored in men who are at risk and reprogrammed to stunt the growth of tumors, researchers said on Wednesday. Scientists at Duke University found that a gene, called *hiwi*, was up to 16 times more active in men with testicular cancer than in healthy patients. Finding the gene, the first to be directly associated with testicular cancer, could allow researchers to watch for the disease and genetically reprogram misbehaved cells, stunting the growth of a cancer tumor. "We still have a way to go before we completely understand the major cause of this type of cancer," Haifan Lin, who led the study, said in a telephone interview. "But there also is the potential for long-term therapeutic applications in that hopefully some cancers can be cured by reducing the activity of this gene," he said. *Reuters*



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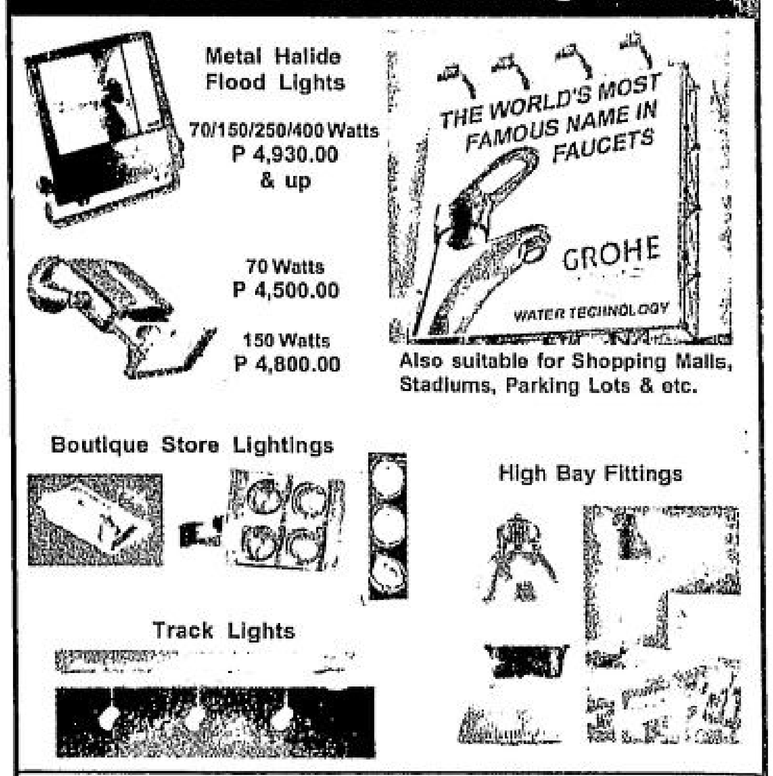

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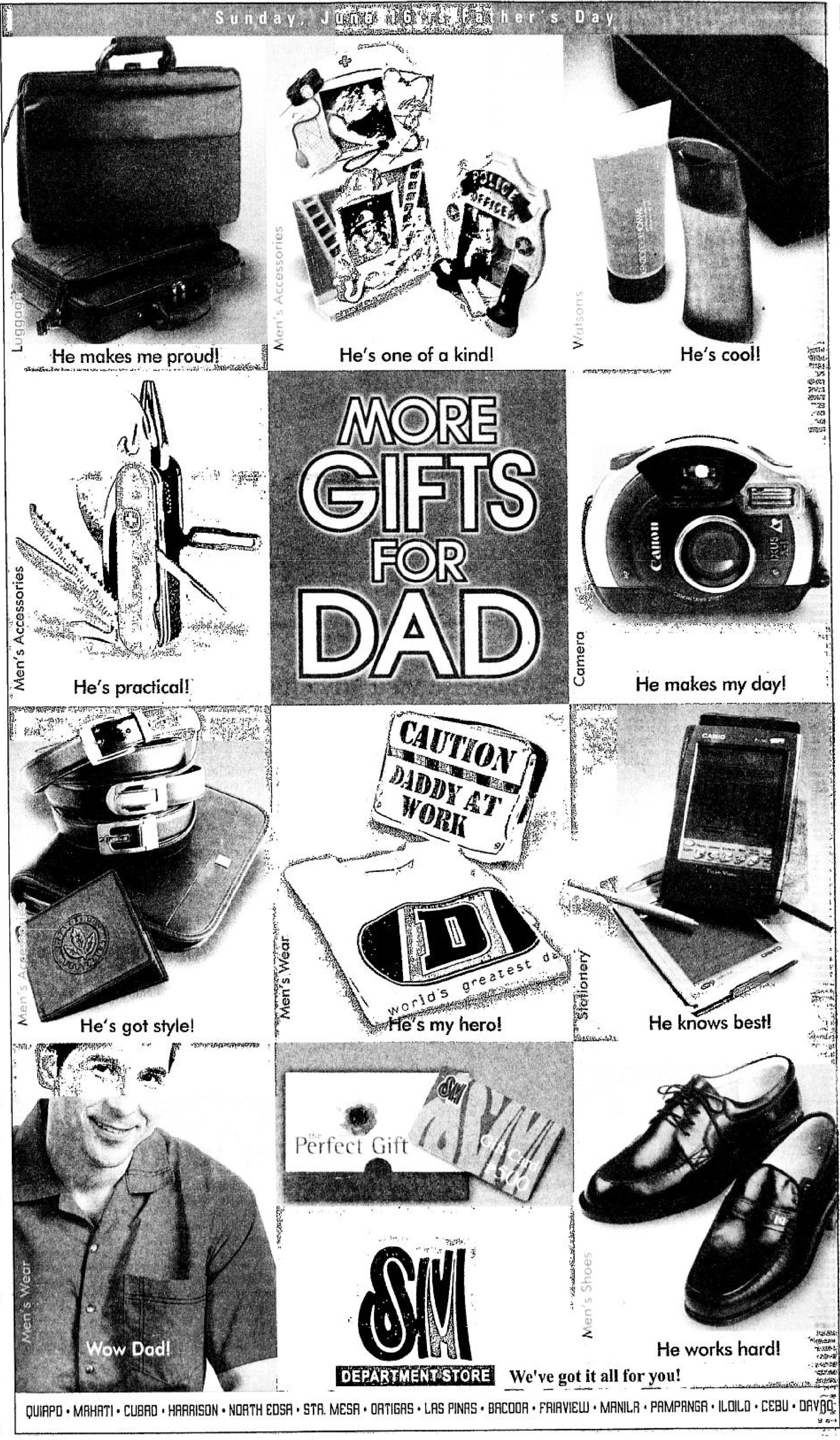

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Northern Luzon Bureau
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074) 443-9255
Fax No. (074) 443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

Southern Luzon Bureau
23 Aurora St.,Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No . (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Visayas Bureau
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

Mindanao Bureau
FEP Printing Corp. Bldg.
Ma-a Road, Davao City
Tel. Nos. (082) 244-1770 to 71
Fax no. (082) 2441771
E-mail:
pdiminda@dv.webling.com

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Western sections of Northern and Central Luzon will experience cloudy skies with widespread rains and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thundertorms.

source: **pagasa**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi32° Lo 25°
Baguio	Rains	Hi 21° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Davao	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/06/06/02

ROUNDUP

Election gun ban

COTABATO CITY—Police here arrested a 30-year-old man for possessing a homemade pistol, making him the first to be taken in for violation of the election gun ban. The firearms ban is being implemented since May 30 in connection with the July 15 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections. Senior Insp. Roger Legazpi, police station 2 chief, identified the suspect as Ismael Lidasan of San Vicente Extension, Cotabato City. Police also recovered a double-bladed knife from Lidasan, who earlier figured in a heated argument with a certain Maguid Guinda.

Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Kids' remains recovered

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Government rescue team recovered the remains of two children who died in a mudslide here last week. Recovered were the bodies of Armand, 9 and Roland Yamido, 7, who were gathering freshwater crabs along the Sinawal River in Barangay Apopong here when they were buried by a mudslide. The bodies of the victims were already in an advanced state of decomposition when retrieved.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Passengers held up

CABARROGUIS, Quirino—Armed men on Sunday held up passengers of three passenger jeepneys in Nagtipunan town, taking at least P200,000 in cash and jewelry, police said. Five armed men successively blocked and robbed passengers of the jeepneys bound for Maddela town along a road in Barangay Anag in Nagtipunan. The passengers told police that the suspects were armed with shotguns and a .38-cal. revolver.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Imported rice for Bicol

NAGA CITY—The National Food Authority is expecting delivery this week of some 116,000 bags of rice from Thailand as part of efforts to stockpile on rice to prepare for the coming dry spell. But Nestor Alcantara, NFA manager in Camarines Sur, said his office will study further whether to accept or not the allocation of 10,000 bags amid an abundance of rice supply here. He said he will consider giving the allocated rice to other Bicol provinces which suffer from rice shortage.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Illegal gambling in Bauan

BAUAN, Batangas—Gambling had invaded this town where a carnival of gambling booths such as *sakla*, *beto-beto*, color games, and *pula-puti* outgross the Ferris wheels, caterpillar and other kiddie rides between the Bauan East Central School and the town's fire department building. The new gambling joints have been set up since last month's celebration of the town fiesta. In front of the fire department, illegal cockfights are held every Sunday morning in full view of the town policemen some of whom also join in the betting. Supt. Manuel Kalalo, the town's police chief, said he did not give the operators permit for the gambling joints.

Mel Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Training for disabled

LEGAZPI CITY—The deaf-mute, the blind, polio victims and other persons with disabilities (PWD) will receive special training in a facility being constructed in Barangay Tagas, Daraga, Albay. Dr. Ofelia S. Vega, Bicol University vice president for research and extension, said the center called the *Harong Patarabang-Tabang* (a house for helping each other), will provide the training for qualified PWDs in the practice of reflexology, massage, aromathology, foot spa, culinary arts, hair science and body culture. Vega said the project would help PWDs function like normal people and become economically self-sufficient.

Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Free computer training

VIRAC,Catanduanes—Some 9,300 students from poor families in 11 towns of Catanduanes underwent free computer training in a three-day Information Technology clinic sponsored by the provincial government. Gov. Leandro Verceles Jr. said the provincial government has allocated P580,000 to fund the series of IT clinics, which was started last April 15. The training includes basic computer operation, word processing, spreadsheet and graphic presentation and web surfing provided by the Catandunaes Internet Network.

Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Health for poor

TABACO CITY—More than 2,900 Philhealth identification cards have been distributed to beneficiaries of the program "Medicare *para sa Masa*" here. The program was pushed to address the increasing number of indigent families who frequently ask for medical assistance from local officials. The membership fees of the 1,200 families were shouldered by the funds of Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro, while those of 1,700 families were shouldered by the city government.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

John O asked to declare real stand on PPA, new power laws

BAGUIO CITY—"John O! *Ano ba talaga ang* stand *mo sa* power crisis (What is your real stance on the power crisis)?"

Leaders of a National Power Corp. union on Tuesday said Sen. John Osmeña should answer this simple question, after the senator cited his displeasure in the Senate investigation of the purchased power adjustment (PPA) charge as the reason for his stage-management of Monday's Senate revamp.

Jimmy Salman, north Luzon president of the Napocor Employees and Workers Union (Newu), said Osmeña's crusade against the power crisis should include the law he helped pass—Republic Act 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira).

The controversial power act had an even greater impact on the rising PPA charges being shouldered by consumers, Salman said.

Osmeña said he defected to the opposition after administration senators blocked all of his efforts to have former President Fidel Ramos subpoenaed by the Senate committee that is investigating the PPA scandal.

He blamed Ramos for the numerous and supposedly onerous contracts which government drew up with independent power producers (IPPs).

A substantial portion of the PPA represents payments to IPP-generated power, which the government is obliged to buy regardless of need or price.

Newu and the Napocor Employees Consolidated Union (Necu) of plant supervisors denounced these IPP contracts between 1999 and 2001 when they lobbied against the omnibus power reform measure.

Osmeña was the energy committee chair, who helped marshaled the power reform bill into law. He reclaimed the chairmanship on Tuesday from Sen. Renato Cayetano, as a result of the Senate reorganization.

Salman said Epira's ambiguous but lengthy time frame for initiating industry competition, and its provisions allowing cross-subsidy may have unnecessarily escalated household electricity charges.

Cross-subsidy allows an investor to own property from both the transmission and generation side of the industry.

Newu had objected to the provision because cross-subsidy merely transplanted the Napocor monopoly from the government to private investors.

Epira allows a three-year transition period before consumers may select their own power suppliers. The law set this time frame to allow government to auction off Napocor's assets.

Salman said a three-year deregulated industry that did not allow competition allowed existing power firms to control the power supply and its prices.

Former Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar had filed an Epira amendment that will immediately freeze the transition in order to allow open market competition this year.

Villar acknowledged here last month that Epira may have been flawed.

Salman pointed out that many of Epira 's provisions include policies and executive orders issued by Ramos, when he began opening the power industry in the early 1990s.

Ironically, Osmeña himself absorbed many of Ramos' formulas and policies for Epira , including Executive Order 483, which was the first measure that obliged power industry players to "unbundle" their rates.

Unbundling is a transparency provision that forces firms to breakdown their billing charges. Epira obliged power industry firms to break down their fees to a power generation fee, a power transmission fee called "wheel-in fee," a distribution fee and a universal levy, which includes the PPA and a watershed management fee.

"This is actually one of the good Ramos measures that was included in the (Epira). If Osmeña is willing to consider amendments to Epira because of the PPA scandal, maybe he should authorize the further unbundling of the universal levy, which Congress created (in Epira) for the public to shoulder the stranded debts of Napocor," Salman said.

He said both Malacañang and Congress had liberally used the levy as a solution to the PPA, "when it is mandated by Epira."

Salman said union members are more wary about "the incidental proposals," which, he said, is being injected into an Epira amendatory measure.

"We suspect (that the) government is more interested in changing the rules so they can sell Napocor assets faster. This is apparent in the manner Napocor is developing a new table of organization," he said. ***Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

BOODLE FIGHT BEN MOSES EBREO

Army reservists in Nueva Vizcaya take their meal the traditional military way—in a mess hall, using their hands to eat food laid out on banana leaves.

Ex-Masbate vice gov cleared of malversation

THE SANDIGANBAYAN has acquitted of graft charges the former vice governor of Masbate.

In a resolution penned by presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena, the Sandiganbayan noted that Espinosa had been haled to court on charges which had been previously dismissed, thereby constituting double jeopardy.

The charges against Espinosa started in 1995 when, as Masbate provincial administrator, he signed seven vouchers and checks which were encashed by individuals other than the stated payees.

Charges of estafa through falsification of public documents and corruption of public officials were then first filed against Espinosa before the Ombudsman.

Now a presidential consultant, Espinosa filed a motion for re-investigation before the court and argued that as provincial administrator, he was duty bound to sign the checks in question since all other required signatures in the vouchers covering the checks were in order.

Espinosa said it would have been dereliction of public duty on his part had he refused to sign the checks.

He noted that under the Local Government Code, provincial or city administrators, together with the treasurer and chief executives, are authorized signatories for local government units.

On orders of the court, the Ombudsman conducted a re-investigation and subsequently withdrew the estafa and corruption charges.

However, it filed seven counts of malversation of public funds against Espinosa before the Sandiganbayan.

The Sandiganbayan noted that the malversation cases amounted to double jeopardy since Espinosa was being asked to defend himself anew on charges that had already been dismissed.

NPA rebels ambush soldiers, kill 1 in Calbayog

TACLOBAN CITY—A soldier was killed on Tuesday in an ambush staged by suspected members of the New People's Army in Calbayog City, Samar.

Capt. Constancio Espina II, spokesperson of the 8th Infantry Division based in Catabalogan town declined to identify the slain soldier because the Army had not notified the victim's family about his death.

The victim is from the 63rd Infantry Battalion based in Barangay Urdaneta, Lavezares town, Northern Samar.

Espina said the victim was driving a military truck on Tuesday night with 18 other soldiers from the 63rd IB on their way to back to their base from Eastern Samar.

But at least 15 suspected rebels fired at the military truck upon reaching Barangay Tinambacan District, some 30 km from Calbayog City proper, about 7 p.m.

Espina said the truck driver was hit in the head and died on the spot. But the passengers were able to fire back, forcing the rebels to retreat to unknown direction. ***Cynthia A. Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau***

89 farmers camp at DAR for share of Danding land

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—At least 89 farmers from four haciendas of businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., have been camping at the Department of Agrarian Reform Western Visayas (DAR-6) office in Barangay Balantang, Jaro since Monday to demand the approval of their petition to be listed as land reform beneficiaries.

The farmers arrived here in three motorized bancas from Buenavista town, Guimaras, after crossing the seas between Guimaras and Pulupandan town, Negros Occidental.

They slept inside the DAR compound at night, with only the buildings' awning to protect them from rain. They refused to budge despite the presence of policemen who asked them to leave on Monday night.

On Wednesday, the farmers tried to barge into the agrarian reform conference room at the provincial DAR office in La Paz but DAR officials kept them out by closing the gates.

They were told to return to the DAR-6 office in Jaro so as not to disrupt the program for the 20th anniversary of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Reynante Umilig, the spokesperson of the ECJ Farm Workers Alliance in Negros (Efan), said the 89 are part of the 1,314 farmers who asked the DAR in 1998 that they be included in the list of those who would receive Certificates of Land Ownership Award (Cloas).

They came from four Cojuangco haciendas—Nueva, Balatong, Fe and Caiñaman.

The Efan is an association of farmers who are claiming to be beneficiaries of the vast sugarcane lands of Cojuangco.

The farmers claimed said they were left out when Cloas were distributed to 1,759 farmers in Cojuangco's haciendas.

At least 3,314 farmers are staking claims as beneficiaries in the haciendas.

The other petitioners, who did not join the camp-out, came from haciendas Adelina, Candelaria, San Antonio, Ara-al, Bonifacia, Soldedad and San Juan.

The 11 haciendas of Cojuangco have a total area of 4,863 hectares.

Umilig said their petition for inclusion, listed in 12 folders, reached the DAR provincial office in 1997 but was forwarded to the DAR-6 office last March.

He said they had not received word about the status of their petition since then.

'Miscommunication' led to Taiwan boat seizure

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A "communication problem" led to the seizure of a Taiwanese fishing vessel by customs inspectors here Monday.

This was the claim of the lawyer of the crew of fishing boat Hung Yu.

"They only spoke Chinese and could not understand English," said lawyer Joseph Vincent Go.

Hung Yu was put on hold by the customs bureau at the Iloilo Fishing Port Complex after it was suspected of carrying chemicals used in manufacturing methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu.

The substance contained in three plastic containers tested positive for residues of shabu during tests conducted by customs inspector Luzviminda Aragon.

But subsequent tests conducted by the Philippine National Police crime laboratory and the National Bureau of Investigation on the chemicals turned negative for the illegal substance.

The customs inspectors became suspicious when the six-member crew told them that the chemicals found in the cargo port were rice wine but they refused to drink or taste it when challenged by the inspectors.

But in a three-page joint affidavit, the crew said they could not answer the inquiries and instructions of the customs inspectors because "we do not know how to speak the local dialect or the English language . . ."

The affidavit was signed by ship captain Chen Teng Mao, Leu A Yan, Hung Shun Ho, Chen A Tsai, Sheu Ing Shan, and Horng Ching Chyr.

They said it was "regrettable" that the customs inspectors mistook the rice wine as illegal substance.

In the affidavit executed through an interpreter, the crew denied reports that customs inspectors demanded P30,000. "We were treated fairly, rightly and with outmost courtesy by them . . ."

But lawyer Rolando Yebes, Iloilo port district customs collector, said that samples of the substance will be sent to the NBI laboratory for further testing.

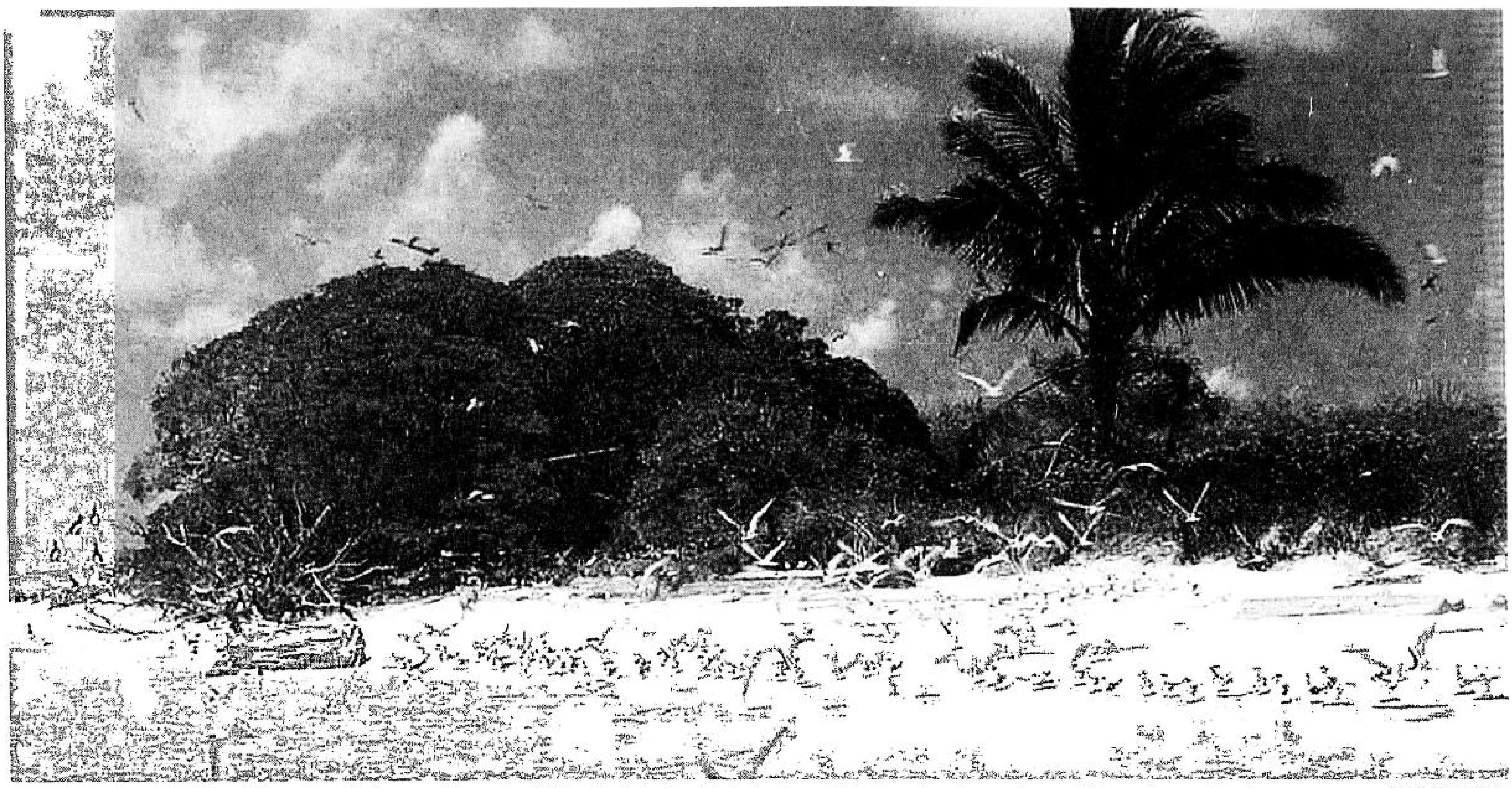
The seized vessel regularly ships marine products of the fishing company Fong J. Wang from Iloilo City to Taiwan.

Yebes earlier said that Hung Yu and other vessels from Taiwan, China and Bangkok are regularly put under surveillance for smuggling because these ports of origin are considered "risk countries."

The customs bureau has also confiscated the cargo of the 200-ton vessel that were not declared in the inward cargo manifest. These include a brand new fish finder, plastic containers, packing tapes and batteries for trucks.

The violation carries a penalty of P30,000 and the forfeiture of the cargo. "We are still determining if there was intent to smuggle the cargo into the country," Yebes said in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER.

INQUIRER*Southern Luzon*
Editor **Jun Bandayrel** ◉ *Bureau Chief* **Floreño G. Solmirano**



The bird islet found in Tubbataha's north reef is home to thousands of birds. Sharks such as black tips, leopard sharks and manta rays frequent this small mass of land. GERALDFORD P. TICKE

Tubbataha: Palawan's crown jewel

By Geraldford P. Ticke
Puerto Princesa City

THE TUBBATAHA reefs in Palawan can be considered among the crown jewels of the Philippines for their pristine beauty that captivates visitors.

The maintenance of these jewels, however, needs support.

Located some 150 kilometers southeast of Puerto Princesa City, the reefs, which have an area of more than 10,000 hectares, are part of Cagayancillo town.

The waters of Tubbataha are home to 372 species of corals and about 400 species of fish.

Six species of marine mammals, including four kinds of dolphins and two kinds of whales, also roam the crystal clear and blue waters of the reefs.

Several threatened and endangered species also wander in the area to lay their eggs on the islets.

On the shorelines of the islets are seven species of sea grass dancing to the rhythm of the ocean current.

The Tubbataha reefs consist of two coral atolls—the north reef, which spans 16 km long and three kilometers wide, and the south reef, measuring five kilometers long and three kilometers wide. An eight-kilometer channel separates the two reefs.

In the north reef is a ranger station, home to the park rangers who take care of the place and see to it that no one violates the laws protecting it.

Also in the north reef is an islet that is home to thousands of birds and is aptly called the bird islet. Sharks such as black tips, leopard sharks and manta rays frequent this small mass of land.

In the southern atoll lies an island where a lighthouse was built to guide fishers at night and serve as a warning that they are inside a protected area where catching fish is prohibited.

There are also dive spots such as the Black Rock, an islet with rock tips protruding from it, and the Malayan Wreck.

Scattered around the reef are mooring buoys, to which boats can be tied. Anchoring is prohibited to keep the corals under the sea intact and maintain it as a safe home to the species of fish.

Landmark legislation

In the 1980s, concerned scientists and divers raised the alarm for the protection of Tubbataha and for it to be declared a national park to preserve its pristine condition and prevent its destruction.

The alarm bell prompted the passage of several measures.

The Palawan Provincial Board issued Resolution No. 244 requesting the secretary of the Department Environment and Natural Resources to proclaim the Tubbataha Reefs as a marine park.

On Aug. 11, 1988, then President Corazon Aquino issued Presidential Proclamation 306 declaring the Tubbataha Reefs and their surrounding waters as the Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park. The proclamation aims to protect and preserve the "coral reef atoll with its abundant and diverse reef assemblage, including the marine turtles and water birds found roosting in the area."

It also expanded the protected area to about 33,200 hectares.

On Dec. 11, 1993, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) saw the reefs' significance and declared the area a World Heritage Site for its importance to regional bio-diversity.

Then President Fidel Ramos then issued Memorandum Circular No. 128 on July 20, 1995 creating the Presidential Task Force on Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park. The Task Force was headed jointly by the environment secretary and the chair of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development.

It serves as the policy and coordinating mechanism of the park.

On Nov. 7, 1996, Ramos issued Memorandum Circular No. 150, amending MC No. 128 and designating the secretaries of defense and environment, and the governor of Palawan as cochairs of the task force.

In June 1998, then Palawan Gov. Salvador P. Socrates and Environment Secretary Victor Ramos signed a memorandum of agreement creating the Protected Area Management Board for the TRNMP.

Just a few weeks back, President Macapagal-Arroyo visited the park and declared it (unofficially) as the best dive spot in the world.

Park protection

Currently, the Kabang Kalikasan ng Pilipinas (KKP), the counterpart of the World Wildlife Fund in the Philippines, is in charge of the implementation of park regulations.

Park protection is ensured through several measures.

Visitors are required to get entry permits from the Tubbataha Management Office (TMO) in Puerto Princesa City before they can go to the park.

Entrance fees consist of vessel entry fee, $50; foreign guest entry fee, $50; local/expat entry fee, $25; dive master fee, $25, and repeat entry fee (for the season), half price.

Dive tourists are also required to follow park rules and regulations found in the brochures that are given to them at the start of the trip.

Divers from all over the world usually visit the park during the months of March to May to see Tubbataha's underwater coral gardens and marine life.

Last year alone, 692 guests visited the park with a total of 66 trips.

Local tourists were the No. 1 visitors comprising 30 percent. Coming close are Europeans; 29 percent; Asians, 28 percent and the rest are Americans.

Most visitors avail themselves of the professional services of dive boats, in which the tourists could sleep or virtually live in while they enjoy their visit to the park, which is quite remote.

Before entering the park, boats have to register first at the ranger station through two-way radio.

The ranger station was built in 1995 to provide year-round protection in the reef. Manning it are the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard, augmented by civilian rangers from the KKP.

The rangers' tasks include patrolling the park, watching over the visitors, educating the public about resource protection and providing assistance to research.

They are equipped with patrol boats, a radio communication system, a global positioning system and radar with a 60-mile-radius range and other facilities to ensure effective protection.

Threats

Despite the presence of a ranger station and regular patrolling by park rangers, however, some boats still get in the way—either intentionally or accidentally— especially when fishing boats without the aid of a global positioning system find it hard to get the right coordinates through maps and compasses.

Small boats, however, are not considered big threats.

Fishing vessels coming from as far as China are the ones threatening the bio-diversity of the park.

A few months back, five Chinese fishing vessels were caught in the area with scores of marine turtles and paraphernalia used for illegal fishing aboard their vessels.

Another incident involving Chinese fishermen happened just a few weeks ago. The turtles of Tubbataha were the main targets of the poachers.

The crewmen of the first five vessels caught (not for the first time, incidentally) are now detained at the Palawan Provincial Jail and are finally facing charges in the courts, while the fate of the 20 arrested recently are in the hands of the National Committee on Illegal Entrants. In the previous arrests, they merely paid fines and were back again after a few months.

Challenges

TMO Park Manager Angelique Songco said: "The biggest challenge for us so far is to find stable financing. While we have financing for the next four years, after 2004, we will have to rely on visitors' fees that we collect."

They are looking for foreign funds, she added.

"We are hoping to use the money that we have so far collected from visitors' fees for the last three years as a leverage to attract more funding from foreign donors. But we also have to ask our national and provincial governments (for help). We need support to maintain the beauty of the park," she added.

During the 1998-2001 period, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff and KKP had a combined collection of P2.6 million, aside from foreign exchange collections of $19,414 and 100 Deutsch marks, from local and foreign visitors to the Tubbataha Reefs.

So far, park revenues are not enough to meet the estimated P6-million budget required to manage the park effectively.

Of the collected funds, P200,000 was used for the construction of the ranger station.

The KKP, PCSDS and Tubbataha Management Office are now in the process of finalizing the turnover and centralization of all collections to the Provincial Treasurer's Office. The funds are now held in the trust of the Tubbataha Protected Area Management Board.

Boy with defective heart needs help

By Santiago R. Alcantara

NOT even the worst of congenital heart disease can stop three-year-old Shane Joel Crispino from enjoying childhood in his native home in Sta. Cruz, Virac, Catanduanes.

Despite having been born with a defective heart—a single atrium and a single ventricle—Shane still engages his friends in running sprees and shouting matches. He knows that he will faint from exhaustion afterwards.

A healthy heart has a right and left atrium, and a right and left ventricle, responsible mainly for the delivery of oxygen-rich blood to the arteries.

Shane was diagnosed at the Philippine General Hospital to be suffering from cyanosis, a condition that gives the patient a dark-blue or purple skin due to the absence or lack of oxygen in the body.

Because of this abnormality, Shane's blood does not circulate freely. He finds it difficult to breathe and gets tired easily. He is "abnormally dark-skinned," a "blue baby" among pediatricians.

Jean, the 29-year-old mother, told the INQUIRER that her son was torn between just allowing himself to collapse and stop playing in the middle of a game to abate the "heart attack."

"But a child at play is a child at play," she said.

She could not tell him to just stay in the house, or limit his exposure outdoors.

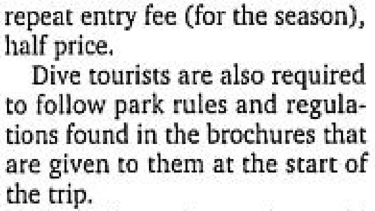
"I can't stop him from playing. It's part of childhood. I can't take childhood away from him," the mother of four children said.

Aside from fainting that normally lasts for 10 minutes, Shane would cry a long time because "the pain is becoming unbearable," Jean said.

There are times when he would break loose on the ground, kicking everything and everyone who comes to his rescue.

Jean said that when Shane is about to have an attack, he would approach older people for assistance.

"He would say his hips are aching when in fact it is his heart," Jean said. "He is too young to understand what's happening to him."



Shane Joel Crispino

In November last year, Jean's husband, Joel, wrote the INQUIRER about their son's condition.

Cardiologists at the PGH advised the couple, both jobless, to be ready financially and emotionally for a series of operations on Shane.

But six months after Shane's story was published, the savings account (No. 584049960) of Fr. Nestor "Butch" Buena, the boy's uncle, yielded P30,000 only.

Father Buena said he and the Crispinos are thankful to all the faceless donors. But he said "this is way, way below the amount needed for the first of a series of operations, which is P80,000."

Dr. Leah Patricia Arceo, Shane's attending cardiologist at the PGH, said they were not giving Shane's family false hopes.

"If the whole process pushes through, we cannot guarantee Shane a normal or a longer life. Medicine cannot give him what he was born without," Arceo said. "Everything would just be palliative, a reliever."

For Jean, she is happy enough that her son is showing signs that he wants to achieve something at an early age.

"*Gusto ko nang mag-aral, Mama* (I want to go to school now, Mama)," Shane told his mother.

Or that he has already achieved something when his story came out in the INQUIRER telling everyone in the neighborhood of his new found popularity: "*Sikat na 'ko! Sikat na 'ko* (I am now famous! I am now famous)!"

Opposition tells GMA not to interfere in fight

From page A1

want to listen to," Drilon said in a press briefing.

In Malacañang, administration officials said the country could not "afford the paralysis of our legislative institutions" and pleaded with members of both chambers to help resolve "a freak incident."

In the House, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. urged the two Senate power blocs to enter into a new power-sharing arrangement to resolve the leadership crisis.

"I am only tossing an idea because right now, there is a paralysis in the Senate," De Venecia said in a TV interview.

It would take time for the Supreme Court to tackle the issue, if someone brings it for resolution, he said. But the impasse has to be resolved before the second regular session opens on July 22, he added.

Revilla is in the United States recuperating from a spine operation. His doctors have reportedly said he needs three months to complete his recovery.

In a television interview and in press statements distributed by his staff yesterday, Revilla said he had pledged to the President his continuing support for Drilon's leadership.

He also condemned the "rump sessions" being conducted by the "new majority" led by Senate President Pro Tempore Blas Ople.

Double-talk

Opposition Sen. Gregorio Honasan blasted what he said was the President's double-talk, and said it was unfortunate that Ms Macapagal called Revilla up not to find out how he was but to ask if the ailing senator was jumping to the side of the opposition.

"Can you imagine how petty we have become? How divided we have become? It's sad," Honasan told Senate reporters.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the President was interfering in the internal affairs of Congress when she asked Revilla to stick it out with the administration.

"She should stay out of the internal affairs of the Senate. She should stop meddling here," he said.

Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta also took the President to task. "I thought she doesn't meddle here? I've been saying that the problem is the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing," Oreta said, referring to Malacañang's earlier denial of the Revilla call.

Asked if she would ask the President to stay out of the issue, Oreta quipped, "I don't have to ask her. She should know that."

But opposition Sen. Rodolfo Biazon struck a realistic note. "That is the practice. *Ligawan nang ligawan. So merong ligaw at merong counter-ligaw.* (There is constant wooing.) Whatever appeal you may make, would it be worth two cents? It is now up to the individual senator to either maintain his or her independence from Malacañang and how to respond to importunings (sic) by anybody or any sector or any group," he said.

And "new majority leader" Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said he saw nothing wrong with the President calling a senator for his support or commitment.

"I believe that the President has the right to influence senators, this group or that group, to protect her own legislative agenda," Pimentel said.

"It's better when it's done openly so that people will know. In my book, there's nothing wrong with that but for other people, I don't know. But I respect their opinion."

Arbitration committee?

Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste, Drilon's majority leader, told reporters "it would be a feasible idea to submit this conflict or problem to arbitration."

"Maybe the creation of a three-member arbitration committee composed of highly respected legal experts could be looked into," she said. She mentioned former Senate President Jovito Salonga as one of those qualified to join the committee.

According to Legarda, it was Salonga himself who called her up yesterday morning and proposed the creation of a "mediation group or arbitration committee."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the position taken by the administration bloc should be "a challenge to the other group . . . to look at possible solutions to this problem."

"Where do we go from here? How do we move forward?" asked Pangilinan.

Drilon said the coming month-and-a-half break should be enough time for the two sides to talk things over. "For the sake of our people and our country, the impasse would have to be resolved and we expect it to be resolved before July 22," he said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said the sudden change of heart of the administration legislators was a reaction to the public criticism that the Senate rift has drawn.

"We are embarrassed at what is happening," he said. "The public is fed up and we should now take steps to save the Senate as an institution regardless of who is right or wrong."

Sen. Noli de Castro, once rumored to have entertained thoughts of defecting to the opposition, said it was the "duty of the senators, being elected and public servants, to listen and not ignore the nation's cry for reconciliation and unity."

De Venecia said perhaps the best solution was to force a meeting of the two sides.

"So I think if we could bring the two groups together, go to one room, lock the doors and (hold) negotiations until a consensus on a new power-sharing arrangement emerges from the Senate, (then we'd be all right)," De Venecia said.

He said Drilon did not necessarily have to lose his position under any power-sharing scheme. Another alternative would be for one side to succeed in getting a majority to install a stable leadership.

"What is important is to stabilize the political leadership in the Senate so that there will only be one Senate and (we can) put an end to this tragedy of two Senates which is confusing our people, confusing us in the House, the international community and paralyzing all the bills in Congress," De Venecia said.

Political realities

In Malacañang, acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable Jr. said the President "didn't have any specific reaction," but said she was receiving regular reports from her adviser for legislative affairs, Gabriel Claudio.

"She accepts them as realities of politics," Afable said.

Afable said that the Palace was hoping that Congress could "repair itself" from the political damage caused by the standoff between administration and opposition lawmakers.

"I think this is a freak incident," Afable said.

Afable said that the problem did not result from institutional causes but rather from "a certain confluence of events and sentiments of some people."

In Cebu, Vidal acknowledged the separation of three branches of government, but said the prospect of "clear, immediate damage" should force the President to "do something."

Vidal said investors might become wary again of doing business in the country because of political squabbles.

"The division now only shows that the so-called 'working unity' which both the majority and the opposition achieved before was not a true unity. Each of them has his own interest in mind—survival in a political game—and not their avowed promise when they won the elections: genuine service for the people," Vidal said.

Vidal also expressed sadness that a Cebuano senator, John Osmeña, caused the crisis.

"I just hope and pray that he knew what he was doing. He is the most senior political leader from Cebu and he sure knows what he is doing. I don't blame him. Nobody can tell him what to do, and we can't force him to do things either," Vidal added. ***With reports from Lino K. Parone Jr. and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Senate coup an exercise in futility

From page A1

preme Court in the case of "Jose Avelino vs. Manuel Cuenco" where a sharply divided court ruled that when one of the 24 senators is outside of the country, the attendance of 12 senators in a session constitutes a quorum that can lawfully conduct legislative business.

The problem with this ruling, however, is it cannot be considered conclusive enough to qualify as the rule to be followed in determining how many senators constitute a quorum if any one or more of them are abroad.

Quorum doubts

Chief Justice Manuel Moran noted that "there are four members who believe that there was no quorum . . . as against four other members who believe there was such a quorum. Two members declined to render their opinion on the matter because of their refusal to assume jurisdiction. And one member is absent from the Philippines."

At the time the decision was rendered, the tribunal consisted of one Chief Justice and 10 Associate Justices. Today, its composition is one Chief Justice and 14 associate justices.

It bears noting that the 1949 decision is based on the 1935 Constitution. The issue of whether or not the 12 opposition senators who participated in the June 3 power grab can lawfully undertake the contested actions will have to construed in the light of the 1987 Constitution.

Although some parts of the 1935 Constitution on the legislative branch were included in the present Constitution, the latter contains other provisions that substantially changed the principles that govern the duties and responsibilities of the existing Congress.

Whether or not the equivocal ruling of the tribunal in 1949 quorum case will still apply to the June 3 incident in the light of the 1987 Constitution is a big question mark.

The issue will not be resolved unless either one of the contending groups of senators brings up the matter to the tribunal for proper resolution. It is doubtful though if either group will be inclined to take such move because of the uncertainty of the result and the adverse effects of any ruling that may be made to their future political plans.

Trust our politicians to be wary about taking risks that may adversely affect their ability to engage in wheeler-dealer activities or limit their opportunity to take advantage of anything that comes their way.

Too late a move

Had the Senate "coup" not taken place, tomorrow would have been the last session day of both houses of Congress. The opposition's 15-minutes of fame spans four days only.

Since the House of Representatives has already adjourned sine die, after taking the cue from its Senate counterpart, the insistence of the 12 senators who consider themselves the new majority to perform legislative functions has come under serious doubt.

The two chambers cannot act independently of each other in the schedule of their sessions. They have to convene within the same time frame. Neither house can hold its sessions when the other has adjourned or ceased to conduct legislative activities.

The members of the both houses can rant and rave till hell freezes over about the validity of their adjournment. But at the end of the day, when the tribunal has to make a ruling on whether or not the legislative rules were followed, it is the certifications of the Senate President and Speaker on the date of the cessation of official business by their respective chambers that matters.

Outside of the mundane resolutions they passed, the rump session of the opposition senators did not accomplish anything that will endow their group with the status of legitimacy as the new Senate majority.

They have not "approved" a bill that will bolster their claim that they wield the true powers of the Senate. Their actions have been wisely ignored by the business community as political antics that do not merit attention, much less concern.

In short, the power grab has gone kaput. Nothing meaningful was accomplished. Other than reducing by four days the scheduled legislative sessions, the political maneuvering had no effect at all on the already muddled political landscape.

Next session

If Sen. Ramon Revilla keeps to his commitment to support Senate President Franklin Drilon, and Drilon successfully convinces an opposition senator to support him, whatever "gains" the opposition senators may have achieved in their four days of glory will go down the drain.

When Congress convenes on July 22, and Drilon manages to get one opposition senator in his favor, the 13 pro-Drilon senators can easily gain approval of a resolution that will maintain the hierarchy of Senate officers and the leadership in the standing committees to their pre-June 3 status.

In all probability, the short-lived power takeover will be simply ignored. By a vote of the majority senators, the minutes of the Senate can be sanitized to exclude any mention of the June 3 caper of the opposition senators.

By acting as if the controversial events did not happen, the administration senators will maintain the integrity of their earlier declaration that the Senate adjourned sine die on June 3 and therefore no official acts were performed by the Senate after that date.

Nobody won in that "coup." The opposition senators showed to what extent they were willing to accomplish their political objectives. Sen. John Osmeña proved beyond doubt that he is the master of political opportunism. He will sleep with anyone who can give him what he wants.

But the biggest losers in this unfortunate incident are the senators themselves, regardless of political affiliation. The power grab further eroded whatever little respect the people still have for them.

The ridiculous spectacle of senators walking in, then walking out, adjourning and convening in separate rooms has validated the belief of many that the senators are no different from their much-criticized counterpart in the House.

Indeed, the days when senators were looked up to for moral uprightness, rectitude and statesmanship are really over.

FBI: Lacson has dollar deposits

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He said the US Attorney General's Office and the FBI had searched bank accounts in the name of Lacson, his wife Alice, and the company Ocean Light.

The video also showed Wycoco, Latimer and an unidentified FBI representative talking about Lacson's other possible legal culpability.

The FBI representative raised the question whether Lacson had any claims to naturalization. Latimer replied, "He lost his residency several years ago."

This promoted Wycoco to ask: "He used to be a green card holder?"

Latimer answered: "I think he filed some false information and application some years ago . . . (inaudible).

"TV Patrol" said Lacson did not declare his dollar deposits in his Statement of Assets and Liabilities (SAL).

Net worth

In an interview with INQ7.net that it posted on its website on July 27, 2001, Lacson said his net worth was P19 million.

He declared a net worth of only P1.7 million in 1996 as a police officer.

GMA 7's "Saksi" reported that Justice Secretary Hernando Perez admitted that the FBI had indeed confirmed that Lacson had bank accounts in the United States.

At the launching of the Department of Justice (DOJ) website yesterday in Manila, Wycoco disclosed that the FBI had already furnished the Philippine government, through the DOJ, with a list of Lacson's bank accounts in the United States.

"I understand that our counterparts in the US FBI had sent the report. I was able to talk to my FBI counterparts yesterday. They told me that they sent the package yesterday but I'm not sure if it is already here," Wycoco said.

Asked to describe the report, he said: "I have not seen it yet. But it's a book-bound evidence, including bank transactions, facsimile of bank records and copies of checks."

"Let's wait for it then we will know its contents—how many bank accounts and how much," the NBI chief said.

Wycoco made the disclosure a day after administration senators released Committee Report No. 66 recommending to the DOJ the indictment of Lacson and Superintendents Reynaldo Acop, John Campos and Francisco Villaroman for kidnapping and drug trafficking.

Acop, Campos and Villaroman were members of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) when Lacson was its head.

With the FBI report, the prosecution of Lacson for money laundering now depends on the DOJ and the Senate, according to Wycoco.

Money laundering

Aside from money-laundering, Lacson "at the very least, might be held for violation of other laws," Wycoco said. He did not enumerate.

Asked if the report was addressed to Perez, Wycoco said: "I don't know if he had seen the report."

Perez, who led the launching of the DOJ website, expressed surprise when asked to confirm Wycoco's disclosure.

"We have not received any communication yet. Undersecretary (Manuel) Teehankee has not reported to me the receipt of any information and neither have I received anything," he said.

Perez explained that "for the sake of efficiency" he had designated Teehankee "to receive any information from the US on behalf of the DOJ."

The justice secretary said he had asked the United States to provide the government with the bank statements of Lacson's accounts based on the request of Corpus.

"As soon as we have received it, we will make an announcement and we will furnish the Senate with a copy of the report," Perez said.

But as soon as Perez finished talking to reporters, Teehankee and Wycoco immediately approached the justice secretary. They told Perez that he would have to be briefed on the US report.

Announcement today

Teehankee admitted receiving the report but said that the DOJ would make a formal announcement today.

Last year, Wycoco confirmed the existence of two bank accounts at Van Nuys in California based on a letter from the FBI. The amounts, however, were "insignificant."

Corpus' revelation about Lacson's bank accounts abroad prompted the Senate blue ribbon committee and the committees on public order and illegal drugs and on national defense and security to conduct a joint investigation on Lacson's alleged involvement in drug trafficking and kidnap-for ransom activities.

Administration senators claim that the opposition staged a coup in the Senate in an attempt to prevent the committees from releasing Committee Report No. 66. ***With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Rocky Nazareno***

'If they want to look ridiculous, it's up to them'

From page A1

the minority session was ongoing.

"If they want to look ridiculous, it's up to them," he added.

Pichay said the mock session had no effect on the House since it was staged only for media mileage.

But two members of the administration coalition, Rep. Nerissa Soon Ruiz (Cebu 6th district) and Rep. Antonio Yapha (Cebu 3rd district), said they would withdraw from the administration bloc, calling the move of the majority to adjourn the House session on Tuesday "a sham and a shame."

Senate resolution

Sen. Edgardo Angara said a copy of the Senate resolution on disbursements which was adopted Tuesday was sent to the Land Bank, where Senate funds are deposited.

"That is only a precaution, that rather than the Senate President alone signing checks and other disbursements, we just required that henceforth, it should be the joint signature of the Senate President and the majority leader and if he continues signing those checks, the banks will not honor them," he said.

The resolution was signed by all the 12 opposition senators who attended the session and was honored by the bank, he added.

Angara said his group also disallowed committee disbursements without the clearance of the new committee heads or the chair of the accounts committee.

"And if they continue, then that would be technical malversation, and the auditor will not honor it," he said.

Angara, often described as the de facto leader of the opposition, described the passage of the bill as historic, as it came two days before the global celebration of the International Migrant Workers Day on June 7.

"We made history today," said a beaming Angara.

Co-authors of the proposed law were Senators Sergio Osmeña III, Gregorio Honasan, Vicente Sotto III, Loren Legarda, Manuel Villar, Rodolfo Biazon, Juan Flavier, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Robert Jaworski, Renato Cayetano, Ople and Pimentel.

Asked what the new majority had achieved thus far, Angara talked about perceptual results.

"Now, the Senate is independent and that means a lot," he said.

"People from the provinces called and said this is good for the country because we are reasserting the independence of the Senate. That is not a tangible material achievement, but that is better than material because that is perception of people."

Locked doors

In all, 14 minority members and two independent congressmen attended the one-hour "session" that was held outside the plenary hall.

At exactly 2 p.m., the congressmen walked toward the hall entrance and tried to pry open the locked glass doors.

They ended up holding their session outside the entrance, their staff members supplying them with podiums, chairs, a sound system, and even a flagpole—and the rusty hammer.

Minority Leader Carlos Padilla served as the presiding officer with Aurora Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castro as the majority leader.

Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen led the first attack against the majority when he said that other majority members had defied the House leadership's decision to adjourn the session.

This was because many majority members were in the House yesterday to attend several House committee hearings, he said.

"When the session is adjourned sine die, then everything is in a standstill but how come many congressmen were here to attend committee hearings? Are they defying (the House leadership decision)?" Dilangalen asked the floor.

He said the committee on transportation, legislative franchises and national defense held hearings yesterday.

Zamboanga City Rep. Celso Lobregat said that probably the majority members showed up in the hearings "because they wanted to work like us."

The minority session was conducted in an emotional and sometimes comical manner as the congressmen took turns lambasting the House leadership and stressing that they were merely following the legislative calendar.

Also at one point yesterday, Makati City Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino moved to have Speaker Jose de Venecia, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzales and Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II arrested by the sergeant at arms, after Bataan Rep. Tet Garcia moved for the arrest of all other members who did not attend yesterday's session.

Aquino proposed that instead of the other members, the three top House leaders should be arrested as they "were responsible for the confusion" in the House.

The session of the minority was adjourned after Castillo said they did not have a quorum.

Those who attended the session were Padilla, Lobregat, Garcia, Castillo, Jaraula, Dilangalen, Aquino, Rolex Suplico, Abraham Mitra, Gilbert Remulla, Emmylou Talino-Santos, Joaquin Chipeco, Hussin Amin, and Raffy Biazon.

The two independent congressmen who showed up were Representatives Ted Failon and Jose Solis.

Failon said he attended the session because he was "frustrated" with the sudden adjournment of the House.

"There are bills that I wanted to be passed," Failon said.

Five minority members were a no-show: Ronaldo Zamora, Cynthia Villar, Rodolfo San Luis, Gabrielle Calizo and Georgilu Yumul. ***With reports from Lino K. Parone Jr. and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

PLDT, Boni Land sold to Gokongwei family for $925M

From page A1

lion that First Pacific paid for its stakes in the firms, which it acquired after the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

"The attributable value First Pacific will be recipient of is two-thirds of the $925 million," First Pacific executive vice president Rebecca Brown told Reuters.

First Pacific would receive an additional $105 million owed by Metro Pacific from the joint venture, Brown said. "So it's the $600-odd million, plus the $105 (million)."

First Pacific and the Gokongwei group will set up a joint venture firm—67 percent of which is to be owned by the Gokongweis and 33 percent by First Pacific—to take over First Pacific's 24.47-percent stake in PLDT and 50.4-percent stake in Bonifacio Land.

The PLDT stake involved in the transaction consists of 41 million, or 24.47 percent, out of 169 million outstanding common shares, the single biggest block with an effective voting interest of 31.59 percent.

A commitment

In a news conference, JG Summit Holdings Inc. president Lance Gokongwei said the deal "will further reinforce our commitment to the Philippines, particularly to the telecommunication and property sectors."

Gokongwei said his family paid an initial $300-million down payment for the joint venture, with the balance to be paid in three years.

He said the deal valued the land owned by Bonifacio Land at about P50,000 per square meter, which was considered by analysts to be the lower end of the P50,000 to P100,000 per sqm current value.

Metro Pacific paid P33,283 per sqm when it won the land in a government auction in 1995, but that was when the peso was trading at around 26 to the dollar, compared to the current 50.5.

Management buyout

Analysts said the formation of a joint venture could be a strategy to bypass the right-of-first-refusal clause in First Pacific's purchase of its PLDT stake in 1998 from PLDT chair Antonio Cojuangco Jr.

The assignment of voting rights through the joint venture will allow the Gokongwei group to control the shares without an outright sale of First Pacific's telecommunication and property interests, according to analysts.

"Since it's a joint venture with the previous owner, the right of first refusal could be set aside," said Dara Calderon, a telecommunications analyst at KGI Securities in Manila.

The management of both PLDT and Metro Pacific have been opposed to the deal, and there have been reports that PLDT's Cojuangco has teamed up for a buyout with Manuel Pangilinan, chief executive of both Philippine firms and chair of First Pacific.

The two are reportedly preparing a management-aided buyout of First Pacific's stakes in the two firms.

"I wouldn't be surprised if the PLDT board mounts a legal challenge, although the Gokongwei group would have anticipated the challenge and structured the deal to address this," said Edison Yap, a fund manager at Equitable PCIBank.

Better offer needed

Reacting to possible legal challenges to his group's entry into PLDT and Bonifacio Land, Lance Gokongwei said only a better offer from existing shareholders of these companies would stall the deal.

"The only way they can stop this deal is to ask Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (Inc. of Japan, the second-biggest shareholder of PLDT with a 15-percent stake) to match or exceed the bid," he said.

Gokongwei counsel Perry Pe said NTT and other shareholders would have 20 days to exercise their right-of-first-refusal and submit a better offer.

JG Summit chair James Go said the Gokongweis decided to pursue a joint venture with First Pacific because First Pacific "wants to stay in the Philippines, and they believe that the Gokongwei group is a good partner.'

"They are just reallocating their resources," he added. "They want to lighten (their local exposure) so they could go to Indonesia and focus on other investments."

Go also clarified that the deal did not mean that the Gokongwei group's telecommunications arm, Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc., would be folded into PLDT.

Go said his group would conduct a due diligence audit to check on the financial papers of PLDT and Bonifacio Land. ***With reports from Elena R. Torrijos, Abigail L. Ho, Reuters and AFP***

Johnny kids Ping on roll call

From page A1

just finished a press conference Tuesday afternoon following the Senate coup.

Who would enter the elevator when it stopped on the fifth floor but a stern-looking Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

It felt like it would take forever for the elevator to go down. Everybody was hushed, knowing the growing animosity between the administration and opposition senators.

Just before the elevator door opened on the second floor, where the opposition was scheduled to hold its second breakaway session, Flavier blurted out to Lacson, "Ping, *sa roll call, pag tinawag pangalan ko, sabihin mo* 'present' (Ping, when my name is called, tell them I'm present)."

The comment was enough to elicit a boyish smile from the usually serious Lacson, who couldn't but extend a handshake to the diminutive Flavier.

Birthday boy

Among the "ousted" majority, tension was somewhat eased when the administration coalition held a caucus yesterday, the birthday of Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

Seizing his chance to speak at the press conference, Magsaysay called himself the "birthday boy."

He pointed out that, despite the crisis in the Senate, the administration and opposition still shared some "common denominators."

"The other side must try to see that and we are willing to listen to them until they are willing to listen to us. But the biggest common denominator is our country," Magsaysay said.

Asked if they would attend the session yesterday afternoon, Magsaysay answered in jest that the administration senators were not properly attired for the occasion.

"Look at our GQ (Gentleman's Quarterly) colleague Sen. (Renato) Cayetano or our Juan Mig (Manuel) Villar. We're not in proper attire," Magsaysay said.

He then pointed to Flavier who was wearing a checkered shirt and said: "And we have our country boy." To which, Flavier answered: "My only shirt."

Fetus

The light moments in the Senate were marred by the discovery of a fetus on the sixth floor of the Senate building yesterday.

The fetus was accidentally flushed into a toilet bowl of the women's comfort room.

Janitress Gema Atalin said she and a colleague had noticed blood splattered on the floor of one of the cubicles.

"But when I looked into the bowl, I saw a clump of blood covered by tissue paper," Atalin said.

Atalin said she and her colleague tried to flush down the clump but failed.

"We flushed again and again. The clump of blood broke into smaller pieces because of that," she said.

Black

Staff members of some administration senators have been wearing black since the start of the Senate crisis on Monday.

The practice of wearing black was started by the staff of Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

"Wearing black is our way of showing our support for our bosses," said Jojo Digao, Pangilinan's media relations officer.

The staff of Sen. Robert Barbers and Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar followed suit.

Villar is packing his bags. But this is not to let go of the second highest position in the Senate, which is also being claimed by Sen. Blas Ople following the coup.

Villar said he was packing his bags to attend the World Food Summit in Rome.

As chair of the Senate committee on food and agriculture, Villar will attend the weeklong summit to find new ways to bolster the country's food security.

He denied newspaper reports that he had started packing his things in his office to give way to Ople. ***With a report from Cynthia D. Balana***

RP-US logistics pact in the works

From page A1

Justice and Foreign Affairs was currently drafting the MLSA, and that he, Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Justice Secretary Hernando Perez would "soon" recommend it to the Cabinet.

Malacañang indicated that it favored the agreement that US Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz had urged the Philippine government to sign.

Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable Jr. said that while a recommendation had yet to reach President Macapagal-Arroyo, "we consider the MLSA important to our strategic relationship with the United States and to our national security."

The proposed MLSA will allow the US government to put up storage facilities in the Philippines in exchange for military assistance and equipment.

Militant groups and certain DFA officials have opposed it on the grounds that it would give the US government basing rights and pave the way for the reestablishment of US military bases here.

Reyes, however, denied this. "There is nothing in the MLSA about basing rights," he told reporters before attending a hearing of the House defense committee.

Afable admitted there were "certain controversies" in the agreement that would "have to be threshed out at the proper command levels of the Armed Forces and our diplomatic levels."

At a news conference here Monday, Wolfowitz pushed for the signing of the MLSA and promised increased military assistance. He said the agreement "will allow us to work more closely" in the fight against terrorism.

But House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla and Negros Occidental Rep. Jun Lozada yesterday urged the government to hold consultations before signing the MLSA, which critics had described as a rehash of the proposed Acquisitions and Cross Servicing Agreement that the Senate rejected in the early 1990s.

Balikatan

Afable said Malacañang was also amenable to the US government's plan to extend the Balikatan 02-1 exercise due to end on July 31.

"Yes, we welcome it. The statement was made in good faith," he said of the offer of US defense officials for US troops to extend their stay in Basilan.

"They have good intentions and they have shown a consistent adherence to our processes. So there's really nothing to be worried about," he added.

Under the Balikatan, US troops are training their Filipino counterparts in anti-terrorism operations.

Wolfowitz met with the President Sunday night in Malacañang. Later, Ms Macapagal approved the US proposal for its troops to become more involved in military operations against the Abu Sayyaf, which is holding hostage US missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap.

The 160 US Special Forces in Basilan can now join Filipino troops during patrols at the company level, but they are still not allowed to join in combat.

Afable said "several options" were being considered: extend the Balikatan under the present arrangement; let US troops stay longer in Basilan; extend and move the exercise elsewhere in the country; or open another bilateral exercise.

But he said "specific options were not discussed" during the meeting in Malacañang.

Neither has the Philippine military informed the President of the option it prefers.

Afable said the subject of the MLSA was not raised at the meeting. But he said that "if the Americans consider it urgent, then it will be urgently processed within the system."

Implications

But Lozada, chair of the House committee on foreign relations, said there should be "wide consultations" with leaders of Congress "because this kind of agreement has big implications on our national security and sovereignty."

He said the US government should not "dangle the carrot" of military aid now in view of the crisis of leadership at the Senate.

"The impression this gives is that the US is taking advantage of the political mess," he said.

Padilla said the government should first let Congress review the draft agreement.

He recalled that Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos produced a draft MLSA when Lozada's committee was looking into the matter as well as the Balikatan exercise.

"We have yet to see the text of the proposed agreement, a copy of which we saw a few months ago," Padilla said.

He also said the Philippines should not commit to buy military hardware only from the United States.

But Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr., chair of the House defense committee, described the MLSA as "advantageous to us because the US will be buying supplies from us and we can avail ourselves of military equipment from them."

He said that contrary to speculations, the agreement dealt only with supplies and logistics. ***With reports from TJ Burgonio and Gerald G. Lacuarta***

Pinoy student wins UN painting contest

From page A1

nila, won first prize in a contest organized by the United Nations Environment Program (Unep) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, one of several events held to celebrate World Environment Day yesterday.

The contest participants, with ages ranging from 6 to 16, were asked to describe and paint projects that were making a difference in their communities and explain how their success could be repeated elsewhere.

Wong's work, "Save Mother Earth by Means of Seeds," won over nearly 2,000 other entries submitted by participants from 14 countries. It illustrates how tree planting and forest conservation campaigns have helped protect communities in Mindanao from drought-induced food shortages and flash floods.

In a brief explanation accompanying her piece, Wong said planting trees and refraining from cutting those on the mountains and in watershed areas would help avert environmental disasters. She said she could contribute to the success of forest conservation programs by joining tree-planting projects.

Unep regional director Nirmai Andrews said the competition "allowed children to document the practical ways the environment can be protected and restored, and thereby inspire us to replicate and accelerate these actions."

The second- and third-prize winners were Wang Yang, 15, of China and Raj Deep Ghosh of India.

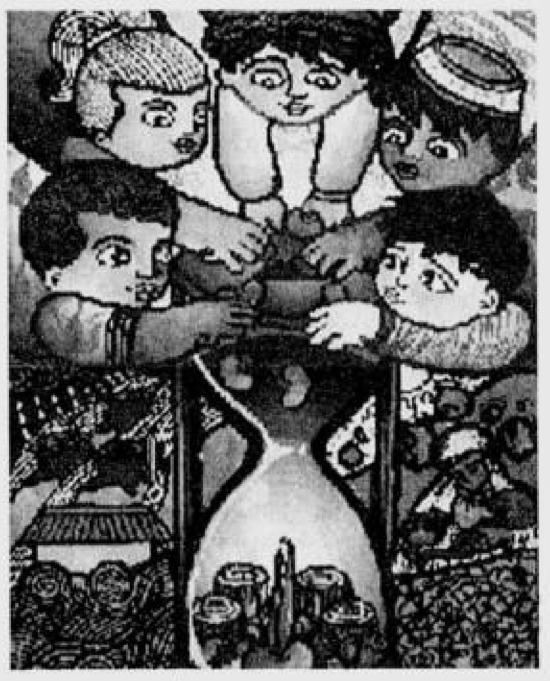
Fine arts

According to Jane Lugo-Morales, Unep regional office information assistant, Wong is the fourth of six children. She has expressed interest in pursuing a degree in fine arts and is preparing to seek admission to the University of the Philippines.

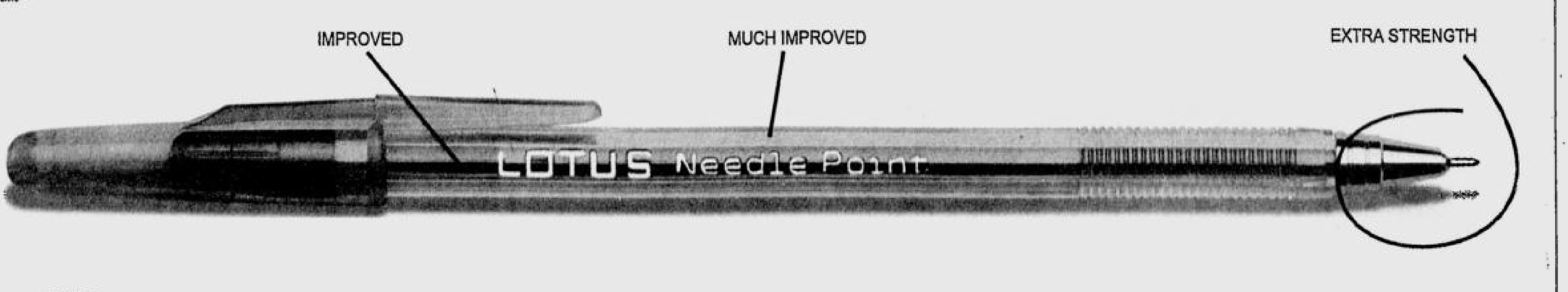
Morales said Wong was no stranger to international art competitions, having won an international contest sponsored by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) and a local one by Microsoft Corp.

Wong flew with her mother to Bangkok yesterday afternoon to receive her award from Unep's Andrews and Bayer Thai Co. Ltd. general manager Khun Chaveng Chao, whose company sponsored the contest.

As first-prize winner, Wong received a plaque and free roundtrip tickets to Bangkok, with hotel accommodations.



JOANNALYN Wong's entry, "Save Mother Earth by Means of Seeds," won for her the first prize in an international competition organized by the United Nations Environment Program. It illustrates how tree planting and forest conservation campaigns have helped protect communities in Mindanao.



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WORLD CUP THRILLERS

Russia grabs Group H lead; US wins

Araneta hosts Bata versus Immonen

PHILIPPINE pool great Efren "Bata" Reyes banners the local challenge as he tackles reigning world pool champion Mika "Fantastic Finn" Immonen today in the Motolite World 9-Ball Challenge at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Reyes-Immonen duel is set at 7 p.m., which is the featured match of the six-day $40,000 tournament starring the world's greatest pool players and the best that the Philippines can offer.

Rising star Dennis Orcullo of Surigao Del Sur gets a taste of international play as he battles Japanese number one Kunihiko Takahashi at 4 p.m., followed by the Antonio "Nickoy" Lining-Corey Deuel match at 5 p.m.

Deuel won six major tournaments last year on top of crowning himself US Open titleholder.

Japan Open winner Francisco "Django" Bustamante starts his campaign by clashing with three-time world titleholder and five-time US Open champion Earl Strickland at 6 p.m.

Under the format, each Filipino will play every member of the "rest of the world" contingent in a race-to-seven elimination round.

WORLD CUP 2002 STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Group A								
Denmark	1	1	0	0	2	1	+1	3
Senegal	1	1	0	0	1	0	+1	3
France	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Uruguay	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Group B								
Spain	1	1	0	0	3	1	+2	3
Paraguay	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
South Africa	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
Slovenia	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
Group C								
Costa Rica	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2	3
Brazil	1	1	0	0	2	1	+1	3
Turkey	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
China	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Group D								
Korea	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2	3
USA	1	1	0	0	3	2	+1	3
Portugal	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
Poland	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Group E								
Germany	1	1	0	0	8	0	+8	3
Rep Ireland	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Cameroon	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Saudi Arabia	1	0	0	1	0	8	-8	0
Group F								
Argentina	1	1	0	0	1	0	+1	0
England	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Sweden	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Nigeria	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Group G								
Italy	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2	3
Mexico	1	1	0	0	1	0	+1	3
Croatia	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
Ecuador	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Group H								
Russia	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2	3
Belgium	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
Japan	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
Tunisia	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

RUSSIA midfielder Egor Titov (9) scoring the first goal yesterday against Tunisia at the Kobe Wing Stadium in Kobe, Japan. Russia defeated Tunisia, 2-0, before the US beat Portugal, 3-2. AP

KOBE, Japan—Russia and the United States won their matches yesterday in the World Cup.

The Russians scored two goals within five minutes in the second half to defeat Tunisia, 2-0, to grab the Group H leadership, while the Americans defeated Portugal, 3-2, in Group D.

Egor Titov scored on a right-footed blast in the 59th minute and Valery Karpin knocked in a penalty kick in the 64th as the Russians won one of their biggest international matches since 1996.

Russia is appearing in the World Cup finals for the ninth time after failing to qualify for the past two tournaments. Russian coach Oleg Romantsev has said he will resign if the team does not advance to the second round.

Romantsev, known as a hard man to work for, told reporters he was not happy despite the result.

"As a coach I will have many reprimands for my players after the game," he said, citing problems in defense and offense. "I am disappointed with the way we played in our penalty box and in their penalty box."

But Russian captain Viktor Onopko said the coach had not been so hard on the players.

"He didn't criticize us in the locker room. I think all that will happen is that in two or three days we will analyze the game," he said.

Both teams opened with early approaches on goal at the 42,000-capacity Kobe Wing stadium as Tunisian goalkeeper Ali Boumnijel backpedaled to punch away a free kick from Russia's Valery Karpin.

The Russian attack improved as the first half wore on, testing a spirited but inexperienced Tunisian team whose lack of international players forced Frenchman Henri Michel to quit as coach earlier this year.

Hundred Presidents Invt'l at Sta. Elena tomorrow

THE INAUGURAL Hundred Presidents Invitational golf tournament of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Golf Monthly and GG&A Club Shares will be held tomorrow, June 7, at the Sta. Elena Golf Club course.

Presidents of multinationals, the banking community, advertising agencies as well as companies and organizations in the golf industry are seeing action in the 18-hole event.

Tee-off will be shotgun style starting at 8 a.m.

Among the companies which are supporting the event are PLDT MyDSL, Unilever 75 Years, Shell, Callaway, Northwest Airlines, Sta. Elena Philippine Airlines,

Premier Wine & Spirits, Metro Pharma, Travelbug Tours and Travel Agency, Pascual Laboratories, Blue Concept and Remy Martin.

The elite field will be vying for the overall title, the top two places in three handicap classifications, the ladies division and the INQUIRER division. The System 36 will be used as a scoring format.

The top finishers will receive trophies and golf equipment. Raffle items include a business class Northwest Airlines round-trip ticket to the US, PAL business class ticket to Hong Kong and golfing holiday to either Vietnam or Bangkok, gift certificates and appliances.

Diamond Motors is also putting at stake a brand-new Mitsubishi Lancer GLX manual as a hole-in-one prize on a designated hole.

Winners of the skills challenge like longest drive, nearest the pin and most accurate are also set to receive handsome rewards.

PDI president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez will be joined in the hitting of ceremonial balls by Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas, Wack Wack President Ben Abalos, Eddie Galvez of GG&A Club Shares and Edward Tiu of the host club.

Also tomorrow evening, the INQUIRER Golf Monthly and GG&A will stage the fourth Golf Club Awards at the Cats of the New World Hotel where the top clubs in various categories like Course of the Year, Food and Beverage, Caddie Force and Overall Facilities will be honored.

Alabang 400 defeats Tahanan Village, captures Nokia golfest crown

ALABANG 400 beat Tahanan Village yesterday to win the Nokia Intervillage-South tournament finals at Wack Wack West.

Alabang 400, which topped the first round of the Nokia South last May 6, squeezed the best from its key players led by team captain Ryan Abdon to score 277 Stableford points for a 557 total, just a point ahead of Tahanan Village.

With skipper Raffy Ilagan and actor-politician Anjo Yllana showing the way, Tahanan Village fired the day's best round of 288 points for a 36-hole total of 556. Finishing third was BF Homes which had a 277 for a 553 total under team captain Joseph Tambunting.

The event organized by Videocom in 1991 is sponsored by Nokia, PLDT, Alaxan, Planet Wing and More Gallery, ICTSI, Mastercard, Philippine Airlines, National Sports Grill, Pisanti, Mizuno and Boracay 357.

Up next is the finals of the Nokia Intervillage East on June 17 and the Nokia Intervillage Central on June 25.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: 2002 NBA Finals—New Jersey Nets vs LA Lakers, Game 1 at 9 a.m. on ESPN (r - 8:30 p.m.) and NBN 4 (r – 10 p.m.)

TENNIS: French Open 2002, Women's Semifinals beginning at 8 p.m. on Sky Cable and Home Cable 29

SOCCER: World Cup Today at 7:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

World Cup 2002 – France vs Uruguay at 7:30 p.m. on Dream 42

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SPORTSWATCH

NBN 4 to telecast fights

PACQUIAO

WORLD boxing enthusiasts may be excited over the prospects of the coming Lewis-Tyson "Fight of the Century" but Pinoy boxing fans eagerly await to see Manny Pacquiao defend his International Boxing Federation super-bantamweight title against Colombian challenger and two-time bantamweight champion Jorge Eliecer Julio. The controversial Lewis-Tyson "Fight of the Century" is on June 8 at The Pyramid in Memphis, Tennessee. The boxing event will be covered live on the National Broadcasting Network Channel 4 on Sunday, June 9, at 8:30 a.m. (Manila time). On June 8, NBN-4 will air a primer on the "Fight of the Century," from 7 to 9 p.m. to be hosted by boxing experts Quinito Henson, Chino Trinidad and Gov. Manny Piñol who will also give Filipino viewers the minute-to-minute analysis of the celebrated title bout the following day.

Mandaluyong 9-cocker

THE MANDALUYONG 9-Cock International Derby semifinal round gets underway today at the Mandaluyong Coliseum, with Pagcor, Casino Filipino-Parañaque, Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo as sponsors. From a field of 56 entries, 15 remained unbeaten after Tuesday's elimination round. The final round is on June 8. The frontrunners, with two victories each, are Mayor Teo Atienza (Puerto Galera I and II), Jessie Viceo (San Rafael), Rep. Claude Bautista and Boyboy Roa (R and B Farm I), Mayor Eddie Alarilla (Meycauayan Gladiator), Mario Villamor and Tito Reyes (TR Phoenix BL), Joseph Chua and Romero Yu (MW JPC Ray Showdown), Rep. Ompong Plaza and Raymond Velayo (Arnis Master Ag-Sur), Julie Cui and R. Velayo (Arnis Master II), Blandy Tolentino (PE San Pablo City), Carlos Ortega (C and J Farms Warriors), Biboy Enriquez (Firebird MB), Bobby Wong (Flyover II), Benito Gaw (BF Lakers) and Mayor Vic Amante (Fantastic J-Cap).

Pasay derby stakes P.3M

PASAY City Cockpit, now recognized as the busiest cockfighting center in Metro Manila, presents another special 4-cock derby tomorrow, Friday, with a cash prize of P300,000 awaiting the winners. To host the derby are partners Dindo Bales and Ansel Cordura. Entry fee is P10,000. Submission of weights is tomorrow, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. For other inquiries, call 816-6750, 843-1746 and 843-1890. Also slated at PCC is the 4-cock derby promotion of newspaper publisher Jake Macasaet on June 14. Pasay Cockpit's 15th Anniversary 5-Cock Derby is set on July 18 and 20. According to pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano, at least 150 entries are expected to take part.

Adidas lightning football kicks off

THE ADIDAS Lightning Football Series kicks off today in Iloilo City. This is part of adidas' enduring vision to further grassroots development of football in the country.

"As always, we hope to discover and cultivate untapped talents particularly in the provinces, bring them to the fore and eventually bolster the country's football program," said John Alonte, president and managing director of adidas.

Expected to grace the kick-off rites preceding the matches starting at 8:30 a.m. are adidas marketing director Angelica Suiza, assistant sports marketing manager Goody Custodio, marketing services assistant manager Odette Velarde and Philippine Football Federation president Rene Adad.

After the Visayan leg kick-off in Iloilo, adidas Lightning Football action goes to the North for the Luzon leg, hailed as the Chris Monfort Festival, on June 8-9, at the Ateneo de Manila University football grounds.

The second of the Visayas legs will be held on June 15, in Bacolod. The Mindanao legs are set on June 11 in Cagayan de Oro and on June 22 in Davao City.

Ten teams will play in each level and they will be divided into two groups per level, with the teams in each group to figure in a single round-robin format.

The team that comes out on top in each level per provincial leg qualifies to the National finals slated on June 30 at the Ateneo de Manila University Football grounds.

The adidas lightning football is presented by McDonalds and Fuji Films in cooperation with HSBC, Hotel Intercontinental Manila, San Miguel beer, Zed and Sony Records.

The adidas Lightning Football coincides with the 2002 Fifa World Cup, the world's biggest football event where adidas is an official sponsor, supplier and licensee of the Fifa World CupTM.

Sports Grill has 30 TV sets

THE NATIONAL Sports Grill is using more than 30 TV sets to monitor the World Cup now ongoing in Korea and Japan. The favorite haunt of sportsmen is located at the 3rd level of Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center in Makati. First round games are featured daily through Dream TV up to June 14. Games from the 2nd round to the finals on June 30 will be telecast live. For reservations, call 752-5431.

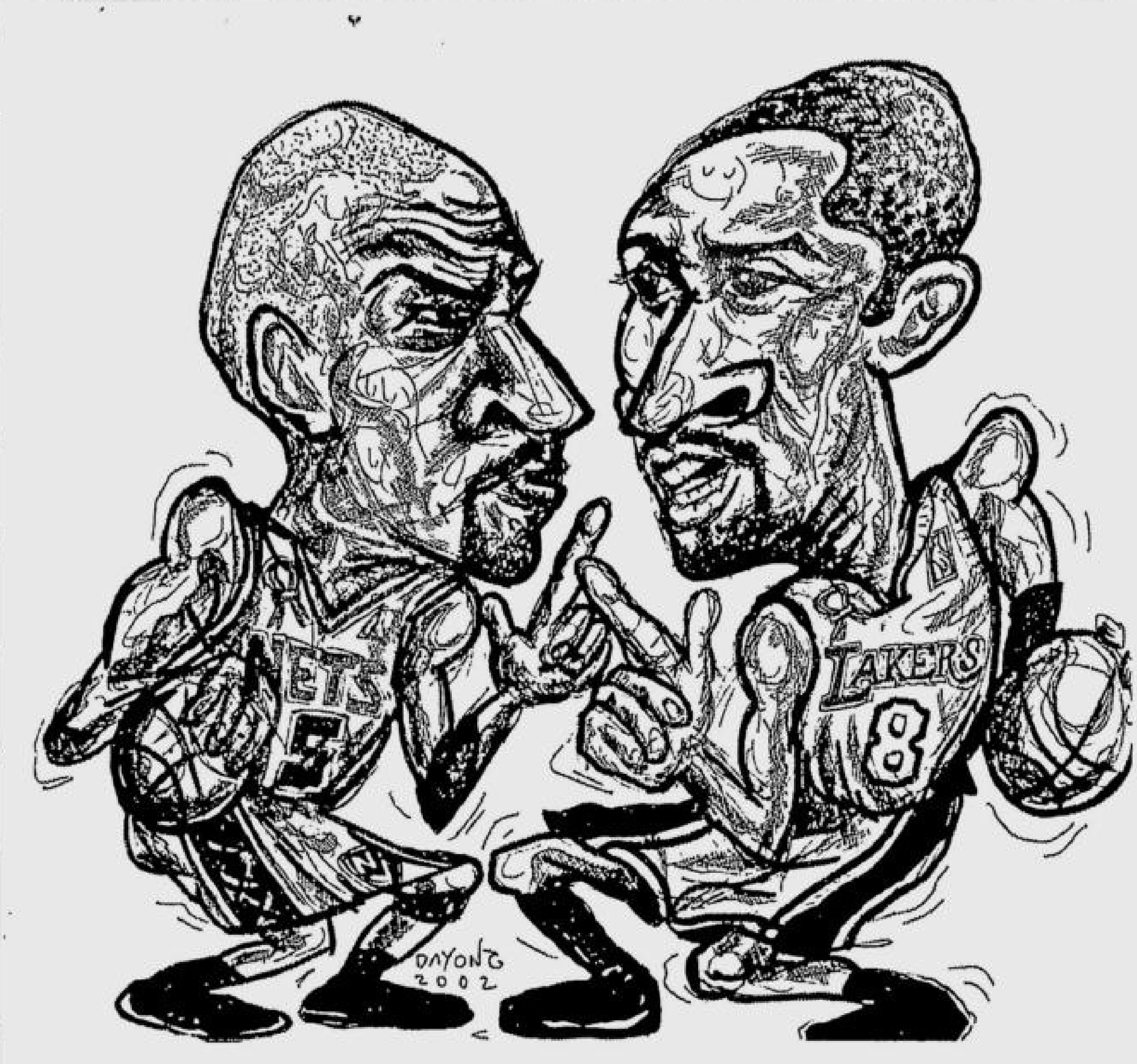
Int'l bowling entries arrive

ENTRIES from Malaysia, Singapore, Japan and Chinese-Taipei started arriving yesterday, adding foreign flavor to the ongoing 31st Boysen-PBC International Open Bowling Championships at the Green Valley Center in Pasig.

Delegations from Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and Guam are expected to arrive over the weekend and compete in the two-week long meet also serving as the third leg of the CG Asian Bowling Tour 2002.

Defending singles champions Tom Hahl and Jennifer Tan, both of Singapore, are heavy picks to win the tournament a second straight time.

The foreign entries though, will see action starting next week as the ongoing eliminations of the meet sponsored by Boysen, Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), Prudential Guarantee, Bowlmart, Prima Pasta, Regent Foods, ILO Construction, Kegel Asia and Manila Galleria Suites, the official hotel of the event, will involve only the local players.



KIDD (left) gets true test starting today against Bryant. ILLUSTRATION/DAYONG J. MENDOZA

Lakers start NBA campaign vs Nets

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey— The Los Angeles Lakers enter game one of the NBA finals at home to the New Jersey Nets today aiming to continue their dynasty but facing a team labeled as one of destiny.

As different as the coasts they hail from, the star-studded Lakers exuding Hollywood cool take to the court searching for a third consecutive championship while the Nets, as gritty as the nearby New Jersey shores, venture into the finals for the first time in franchise history.

While Los Angeles struggled to reach the championship series needing an overtime win against the Sacramento Kings in game seven of the Western Conference final, a third straight appearance in the finals had been predicted for the Lakers since the start of season.

Led by their all-star duo of Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant, the Lakers hold the record of champions, having won the crown 13 times and reached the finals on 21 occasions.

They are also under the reigns of Phil Jackson, the man who coached the Michael Jordan-Scottie Pippen led Chicago Bulls to two "three-peat" championship runs in the 1990s.

That experience will provide the Lakers with a huge edge over the Nets who have made it to the second round of the post-season just once since joining the league in 1976.

Few would have suggested the Nets, a team that produced one of the most staggering turn-arounds in NBA history by winning 26 more games than last season, would even make the finals.

But the Nets, 9-1 underdogs by the Las Vegas bookmakers, have defied the odds at every turn dispatching the Indiana Pacers, Charlotte Hornets and Boston Celtics earning the label as a team of destiny.

Unselfish team play and the wizardry of point guard Jason Kidd, runner-up to San Antonio's Tim Duncan in the league's most valuable player voting, have transformed the Nets from also rans into contenders. ***Reuters***

Nets: Limit Shaq and Kobe

EL SEGUNDO, California—Rookie Richard Jefferson got a little cocky when asked what the New Jersey Nets had to do to limit two of the NBA's best players.

"What do you mean, Paul Pierce and Antoine Walker?" a straight-faced Jefferson said Tuesday.

The comments raised a couple of eyebrows and even got some laughs, but Jefferson got his point across about whether he has any doubts that the New Jersey Nets can limit Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant in the NBA Finals against the two-time defending champion Los Angeles Lakers. ***AP***

Defending Kidd a major task

EL SEGUNDO, California—Derek Fisher calls Jason Kidd the true MVP. Rick Fox says the New Jersey Nets' star is perhaps his favorite player to watch. ***AP***

Ateneo tops Kutitap in 2 OTs

By Dennis U. Eroa

STRETCHED to the limit, Ateneo-Hapee-Negros Navigation did not blink last night as it hammered out a thrilling 85-77 win over Kutitap Toothpaste in two overtimes at the Makati Coliseum.

The win allowed the Eagles to keep the solo lead in the PBL Chairman's Cup.

Big men Enrico Villanueva and Rich Alvarez asserted their might in the shaded lane as the Blue Eagles posted their 11th win in 16 games and moved them closer to their first-ever finals appearance.

Earlier, ICTSI-La Salle made a stirring comeback from 28 points down to shock Shark Energy Drink, 65-52.

The victory put the Archers to within striking distance of Ateneo with a second-running 11-6 card.

Rysal Castro's one-handed shot powered Shark to a huge 36-8 lead, 6:20 left in the second period, but that proved to be the Energy Drink Kings' final shining moment. Shark was still ahead by 17 at the half, 40-23.

After getting a tongue-lashing from coach Franz Pumaren during the halftime huddle, the Green Archers responded in style. They limited Shark to 12 points, six each in the third and fourth quarters—the second all-time lowest score in a half—while exploding for 42 points.

Regulation ended at 54-54 and Mark Saquilayan capped a Kutitap comeback with a towering drive, 68-68, which forced the second overtime.

Villanueva, the leading MVP contender, scored 11 of his 20 points in the first overtime, while the 6-foot-4 Alvarez capped a 23-point performance with a one-handed dunk which gave Ateneo a 75-70 cushion, 1:53 left in the second overtime.

This was the second time this conference that Ateneo labored hard for two overtime periods. The Blue Eagles lost to the Blu Detergent Kings, 91-88, on May 3.

ICTSI-La Salle 65—Yap 21, Cortez 9, Wilson 9, Franco 8, Cuan 6, Sta. Maria 6, Ramos 2, Omolon 2, Magsumbol 0, Zamora 0, Uy 0.

SHARK 52—Junio 12, Castro 11, Sotto 9, Vergara 8, Ybañez 7, Caceres 5, Ortega 0, Rodriguez 0, Bravo 0.

Quarters: 6-27, 23-40, 47-46, 65-52.

ATENEO 85—Alvarez 23, Villanueva 20, Cruz 10, Fonacier 8, Chia 8, Membrere 7, Cruz 3, Anicete 2, Valdez 0, Quimpo 0.

KUTITAP 77—Baguio 26, Saquilayan 19, Dy 15, Salangsang 9, Sison 2, Gelig 2, Mercado 2, Natividad 2, Rivera 0.

Quarters: 16-16, 36-31, 40-45 54-54 (reg), 68-68, 85-77.

Filipinos bow to Italians again

SONDRIO, Italy—Host Italy beat the Philippines for the second straight game, but it was one loss that showed how much the Nationals have improved for the Asian Games in September this year.

Though losing for the third straight time in their first international stint as a team, the Filipinos played better against an Italian side which ripped them apart just a couple of nights ago, staying close for three quarters before bowing, 93-59, at the Palascieght here Tuesday night.

Italy and Latvia thus fight for the right to be called winner of the four-nation, three-day Selecta RP-Euro Basketball Challenge tonight with the Filipino relegated into the consolation round match with Ukraine, another winless side.

Coach Jong Uichico said he was proud of his players' effort against a bigger, quicker and superior squad. Still, he pointed out it takes 40 minutes, not three quarters, to win a game.

Uichico said the national team's learning experience here is invaluable in preparing for the war in Busan.

ITALY 93—Pecila 16, Santarossa 16, Garri 11, Micheiori 10, Rombaldoni 9, Vannuzzo 7, Mian 7, Righetti 6, Masper 4, Tonolli 3, Lamma 3, Rossetti 0.

RP-SELECTA 59—Taulava 12, Menk 10, Seigle 9, Cariaso 6, Duremdes 6, Pennisi 6, Hatfield 4, Racela 4, Espino 2, Hontiveros 0, Fernandez 0.

Halftime: 30-33

Williams sisters make French s'finals

PARIS—Get this much straight: Venus and Serena Williams sisters, with their thunderous groundstrokes, sizzling serves and loud grunts, can play on clay.

No surface can mute their games.

This year on the most famous clay courts in the world, they've entered new territory, reaching the French Open semifinals for the first time ever–both of them. And now they're one win away from another all-sister Grand Slam final.

But Venus at times did hit it hard–very hard –and as usual her 6-foot-1 frame allowed her to track down shot after shot in a 6-4, 6-3 quarterfinal win over Monica Seles. Venus hit a serve at 118 mph (189 kph).

Serena, meanwhile, hardly worked up a sweat in her black dress, routing 2000 champion Mary Pierce 6-1, 6-1 in just 49 minutes, giving up only two points in her final five service games and setting up a showdown with defending champion Jennifer Capriati. ***AP***

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NCR leads medal hunt

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NAGA CITY—Two tracksters posted meet records even as the National Capital Region and Southern Tagalog Region continued to churn out gold medal performances and soar in the Palarong Pambansa elementary and secondary medal tallies yesterday at the Metro Naga Sports Complex.

Western Mindanao's Palson Madsali of Zamboanga City made his Palaro debut by improving the elementary boys' discus throw with a 34.79-meter hurl that went way beyond the 33.34-m record set during the 1998 Palaro.

But it was the record-shattering feat by Paolo Martinez—who leaped to a height of 1.9m on his third try in the boys' high jump—which gave Southern Tagalog the early lead in the secondary competitions.

Counting the four gold medals it won in swimming late Tuesday, Southern Tagalog now lords it over in the high school action with five golds, while NCR has so far hauled two gold medals each in swimming and gymnastics to pace the elementary category.

An incoming senior at the Leceu de Pila High School in Laguna, Martinez said he believed he can still do better if he had enough preparation which was denied of the participants here due to several attempts to postpone the Games.

The 17-year-old Martinez also overcame a distraction during his third and final attempt when reporters covering the event inadvertently crossed his path while taking off. He was allowed to take another try and set a new record, while the sportswriters asked for apologies.

Madsali, who stands 5-foot-7 and is an incoming freshman at the Sibuco National High School in Zamboanga City, made his record-feat on his third attempt.

ROMY HOMILLADA

LEIZEL Labordado of Western Visayas jumps her way to victory in the girls' triple jump during yesterday's Palarong Pambansa.

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ROGER MARGALLO

LEA'S HERE

Fresh from her well-received performance at the Tony awards in New York last Sunday, Lea Salonga planed in fresh and blooming early yesterday morning to do a repeat of her Broadway concert on June 19 at the PICC. After the show, Lea has a number of projects to do in the United States, including the Broadway version of "Flower Drum Song" in October and to record for Walt Disney's animated production of "Mulan 2."

Pasay fears crime upsurge

By Alcuin Papa, Philip Tubeza and TJ Burgonio

AS LOW morale swept through the Pasay City police force, city residents fear an upsurge of crime incidents in the city after Philippine National Police officials relieved all 341 city policemen to undergo retraining in the aftermath of Friday's hostage incident.

PNP officials are also set to file criminal charges today against 21 policemen, led by city police chief Supt. Eduardo dela Cerna, who allegedly bungled the hostage incident where 4-year-old Dexter Balala and his captor, Diomedes Talvo, were left dead at the Philtranco bus terminal in Pasay City before dawn Friday.

The police officers told the INQUIRER that they are "sad and disappointed" over the relief order.

"Why must we pay the price for the perceived incompetence of 21 policemen?" asked one officer who requested anonymity.

"Things have calmed down here (in the city), but it seems no one wants to report any crime to us," said another Pasay investigator in Filipino. "Maybe they are afraid they cannot trust us after what happened. In the same way, we don't feel like working because our morale is down."

When the INQUIRER went to the Pasay City police station, investigators were just milling about, watching television or reading newspapers.

Another officer echoed the residents' fear that the crime rate in the city might go up because of the relief order.

"We doubt if the new recruits sent to relieve us will be as effective for they will first have to familiarize themselves with the city," the officer said.

Also, an organization of police officers in Manila yesterday criticized the relief and retraining of the Pasay police.

"This will affect the Pasay police's performance," said SPO1 Virgo Villareal, of the Manila's Finest Brotherhood Association Inc. (MFBAI). "What will happen to the cases the relieved policemen are handling?"

"Juan should not be blamed for Pepe's mistake, it's that simple," said SPO1 Antonio Emmanuel, another MFBAI officer. "Only the erring lawmen, not the entire police force, should have been made to answer for what happened."

But Southern Police District Director Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez assured the public that the replacement officers from the National Capital Region Police Office would be able to keep the peace in Pasay City.

"There will be intensive orientations

PASAY/ A20

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AMA girl cries rape; teachers charged

By Agnes E. Donato

TWO instructors of the AMA Computer College have been charged before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court for allegedly raping a student.

Charged were Mark Jude Depalobos, of Project 8, Quezon City, and Rusty Magcalas, of Meycauayan, Bulacan. Both are at large.

Court records showed that the alleged rape took place at Depalobos' house after the instructors had a drinking session on the night of Aug. 12, 2000.

The victim said Depalobos and Magcalas cajoled her into throwing a party, after she had finally submitted her thesis on the morning of Aug. 12. Depalobos was the victim's adviser.

Yielding to their request, the complainant invited them to her residence in Project 8, QC for a small gathering.

After eating at the victim's place, the group decided to go to a bar on Timog Avenue. There, the instructors and the victim's thesis partner downed several bottles of beer while the victim kept them company.

But the complainant, who was paying for her companion's drinks, realized that she did not have enough money, so the group decided to continue the party at Depalobos' place.

The victim's thesis partner, however, said that he had drunk enough and went home.

The victim agreed to stay behind, thinking that she was "secure" in the company of her instructors.

The complainant related that Magcalas asked her to drink some beer when she and the accused got to Depalobos' house.

But after drinking half a glass, she said she started to feel dizzy and weak.

It was then that the two instructors allegedly took turns in molesting her.

She said she lost consciousness and did not wake up until the next morning.

In the resolution of the preliminary investigation, Assistant Prosecutor Ma. Theresa de Guzman dismissed Magcalas' defense that he and the complainant were lovers.

De Guzman said she found the complainant's account credible, as the latter appeared to have no other motive to testify against respondents except to seek justice.

"If she had not in fact been raped, the complainant would not have gone public and endured the gory details of her ordeal," the fiscal noted.

She also discounted the minor inconsistencies pointed out by the defense panel in the complainant's testimony, saying that the latter could not be "expected to keep an accurate account of the traumatic experience that she had gone through."

Cops should learn how to shoot

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THAT bloody hostage drama at a bus terminal in Pasay City will be repeated many times over if our policemen are not trained how to shoot.

The cops who were at the scene shot the victim as well as the hostage-taker.

That incident should be an eye-opener for the authorities to make all cops handy with their guns.

***

My estimate is that only one cop in 30 knows how to shoot his service pistol. And that's even a conservative and arbitrary estimate. There could be less.

That one policeman who knows how to shoot spends his own money on ammunition for regular target practice. "Regular" means once a week or twice a month.

The 29 other cops probably fired a gun during their rookie training. Some of them probably got to fire their service pistols when they were drunk—and they were aiming at the moon.

***

After graduation from the police basic training, a cop is issued a full load of ammunition for his service firearm. That's the last ammunition issue he gets from the government.

A cop will have to buy his own ammunition in order for him to become proficient with his gun.

The government leaves him to fend for himself in gun proficiency.

***

When I was a police reporter many years ago, I wrote a story about two Manila policemen being stabbed dead by a street-smart rogue.

The rogue had just snatched a bag from a woman jeepney passenger when a traffic policeman chanced upon him. The traffic cop heard the shouts of the victim and responded.

The cop shouted at the snatcher to stop but the rogue ignored him. He fired at the snatcher but his gun did not go off. The snatcher heard the click-click sound of the gun that did not fire. He turned around, drew a balisong from his hip and rushed at the hapless cop.

***

The uniformed traffic cop died of several stab wounds. Another cop in plainclothes happened by, saw what happened to his colleague and chased the rogue.

The second cop fired his gun into the air to warn the fleeing snatcher to stop. He leveled his gun at the snatcher and fired. But he missed. He was close to the rogue when his shots missed.

The criminal closed the short distance between him and the second cop. What happened to the first cop, also happened to the second cop.

Two cops died that day at the hands of a knife-wielding snatcher. The first cop didn't take good care of his service pistol, the reason why the gun didn't go off. The second cop didn't hit his target because he didn't know how to shoot.

***

The government should make US troops stay in Basilan for as long as they're needed.

The people of Mindanao, particularly Basilan, want the Americans to remain even after the Balikatan or war exercise ends in July.

The people's clamor is more than enough reason for the continued stay of the Americans in Basilan.

***

Two state prosecutors are reportedly so corrupt and their continued stay in their posts is giving the Department of Justice a bad name.

One is a Marikina prosecutor, the other assigned in Caloocan City.

Let's tackle the case of the Marikina prosecutor first.

***

This son of a female dog was once featured in this column for ordering the release of a robbery suspect who happened to be one of the drivers of his son's taxicab.

I've learned more about this guy's shenanigans since he was criticized in this space.

This prosecutor allegedly sold a Montero van recently for P700,000.

***

What's wrong with selling his own vehicle, you'll ask.

The Montero did not belong to him. It was a confiscated vehicle. The police seized the Montero on suspicion that it was stolen. The prosecutor asked the police to turn the van over to him as evidence.

The delay in the filing of criminal cases with the courts by the prosecutor's office in Marikina is blamed on this prosecutor.

He reportedly invites his fellow prosecutors to play tong-its, a lowly kind of poker game, with him every day. The gambling session is held during office hours inside the prosecutor's office.

***

And now, the Caloocan City prosecutor.

For P15,000, this sanamabits will drop a criminal case against a respondent.

Four students of the Philippine College of Criminology (PCCR) held up three women on 4th Avenue, Caloocan City on Dec. 3, 2001.

But only one suspect was charged by this prosecutor in court. The three others, according to the complainants, were not included in the charge because they gave him P15,000 each. The one who was charged didn't have P15,000.

Pu@#$%^& mong piskal ka! Sana maholdap din ang anak mo!

Will oil depot stay or go?

By Jerome Aning

THE MANILA city government yesterday confirmed that negotiations did take place between Mayor Lito Atienza and the country's big petroleum companies regarding the fate of the Pandacan oil depot.

But the mayor's spokesman, Armand Sebastian, clarified that the representatives of the oil firms—Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines—"did not make any concrete proposal."

"There is no agreement yet between the city and the oil firms if the depot's operations are to continue under certain conditions," Sebastian said.

The spokesman said the oil companies did negotiate with the Justice Department about their willingness to scale down their operation and put up buffer zones while they begin to shut down their facilities at the depot.

Atienza, however, has yet to be formally informed about this, Sebastian said.

The spokesman said that, unless an agreement is reached, the ordinance that reclassified the depot site from industrial to commercial will be implemented by June 28.

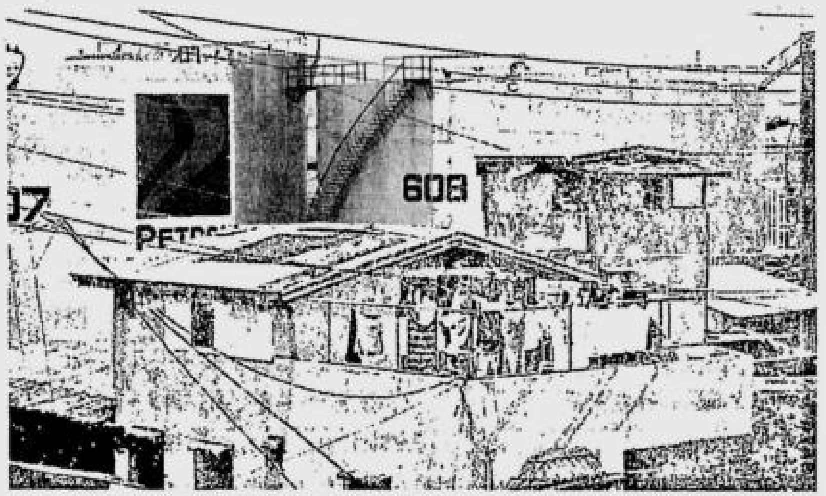
Ordinance No. 8027 prohibited all petroleum storage and transfer operations from the 30-hectare complex.

Sebastian said that the mayor will carefully evaluate any proposal forwarded by the oil firms.

Atienza, he stressed, would also "involve" the City Council in the evaluation of the proposal and in any negotiation about the issue.

The mayor earlier told reporters he is willing to negotiate as long as the oil firms accept the fact that they have to leave Pandacan.

The Council passed the ordinance last November after finding out that depot is a fire hazard and could not be adequately defended by fire and police authorities from a terrorist strike.



PANDACAN depot in the middle of thickly populated area.

Raped inside armored car

By Alcuin Papa, Kelly Gelvezon, and Analiza Malvar

A 16-YEAR-OLD girl was allegedly raped inside an armored car by their drunken neighbor in Makati last Monday.

The girl, "Joyce" (not her real name), along with her mother, filed a complaint yesterday before investigator PO1 Carina Oliquino of the Women and Children Desk, Makati City Police District.

The suspects were identified as Joseph Panes, 20, a motorshop owner, of Namria Compound, Barangay Southside in Fort Bonifacio, Makati City and a certain "Edgar," a welder in the shop, and a resident of the same compound.

The victim said that on June 3, at around 10 p.m., she was on her way to a store to buy "batchoy" when the suspects spotted her. The suspects allegedly invited her to join them in their drinking session.

The girl was hesitant at first, but she finally gave in to their request because they were her neighbors.

After a few shots of "gin pomelo," she told the suspects that she wanted to leave. Edgar however grabbed her by the arm and took her to the armored car where Panes was waiting.

Because of the heavy downpour and the thick walls of the armored car, no one heard the screams of the victim.

TV Patrol hit for 'reckless reporting'

CALAUAN, Laguna—The parents of a student whom the National Bureau of Investigation mistook for a suspect in the May 11 killing of cardiologist Franklin Avellaneda complained against the reckless reporting of ABS-CBN's TV Patrol.

Vivencio Marfori, father of Mart Marfori, 21, said that the primetime news program aired on Channel 2 reported on May 31 the surrender of suspect Rolando Rivera Jr., 20, but showed a footage of his son.

The Marforis were further infuriated when, on June 3, the same news program hosted by Korina Sanchez, Aljo Bendejo and Henry Omaga Diaz showed a footage of Mart when suspect Mark Alba, 20, surrendered to the NBI in Manila.

"This is a blatant display of irresponsibility and recklessness among ABS-CBN reporters to confuse the facts by misrepresenting the identities of individuals over national television," Marfori said.

The young Marfori, who was allegedly detained for 13 hours and mauled by NBI agents on May 15, said the incident was traumatic to him.

The Marforis appealed to the television network to rectify their mistakes.

They said they are filing a written complaint with the *Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas.*

Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

San Antonio concert

THE CONCERT "For the Love of San Antonio" featuring dramatic soprano Camille A. Lopez and the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Ruggero Barbieri will be staged tomorrow night at the Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati.

Nolyn Cabahug is guest tenor while two choirs, Coro de San Antonio under Amelita D. Guevarra and the Seedlings Choir of Dra. Myrna Lopez, will render vocal support.

Pilipino kundimans and love songs like Mutya ng Pasig, Hatinggabi, Pamaypay ng Maynila will be featured. The PPO will render orchestral numbers from Verdi's La Forza del Destino, Mascagni's Cavelleria Rusticana, and Gimenez's La Boda de Luis Alonso.

For tickets, please visit the Santuario de San Antonio parish or call Jasmine at 843-8830.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 6, 2002
9th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **2 Tim 2:8-15**
Gospel: **Mk 12:28-34**

A teacher of the Law had been listening to this discussion and admired how Jesus answered them. So he came up and asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?"

Jesus answered, "The first is: Hear, Israel! The Lord, our God, is One Lord; and you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. And after this comes another one: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these two."

The teacher of the Law said to him, "Well spoken, Master; you are right when you say that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all our heart, with all our understanding and with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves is more important than any burnt offering or sacrifice."

Jesus approved this answer and said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Commentary

The greatest commandment: to love God. To love your neighbor comes second, because it cannot be understood without love of God. God asks for more than solidarity with others; we should make an effort to look at others in the same way that the Father does a certain Rabbi asked: "When can you say that the night is over and the day has come?" One disciple answered: "When you can distinguish a dog from a goat at a distance." No, the master replied. "When you can tell the difference between a coconut tree and a palm tree" said another. No, insisted the master. "So, when?" the disciples demanded. "When you can look at the face of a person and see a brother or a sister. As long as this does not happen there is still night in your heart."

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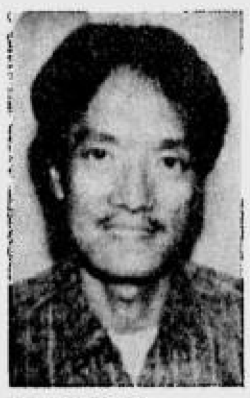


TABELISMA

Missing man

CARLITO Tabelisma, 48, got lost in Divisoria at about 5 a.m. on May 4. He is 5'31/2" tall. He was last seen wearing eyeglasses, yellow T-shirt, blue short pants and shoes. Anyone who knows his whereabouts may contact Amy Tabelisma at 715-5888 or 780-4396.

Fake NBA signature balls found

By Philip C. Tubeza

BESIDES its financial problems, Uniwide Sales Warehouse Inc. now faces criminal charges after National Bureau of Investigation agents confiscated P300,000 worth of fake signature basketballs.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said his men confiscated 178 basketballs bearing fake "NBA (National Basketball Association)" logos from the Uniwide warehouse at No. 90 E. Rodriguez Jr., Ave., Barangay Ugong Norte, Libis, Quezon City.

Wycoco said the bureau began investigating the warehouse after the Pinkerton Consulting Services Philippines complained that it was selling fake NBA basketballs.

NBI-Intellectual Property Rights Division agents, under head agent Rafael Z. Ragos, checked out the warehouse and confirmed that it was indeed importing and selling the fake basketballs.

Wycoco said the bureau then got search warrants from Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 24 Judge Antonio M. Eugenio Jr.

The NBI agents then raided the warehouse on June 3 and confiscated 178 fake NBA basketballs.

Wycoco said the bureau is now preparing to file charges against the owners of Uniwide Sales for trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Pasay fears crime . . .

From page a19

for officers assigned to relieve the Pasay policemen," Gutierrez said.

He said he would make sure there would be "a proper transition and turnover of responsibilities" between the relief force and the Pasay policemen.

PNP chief Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza earlier ordered the relief of the entire Pasay City police force to undergo retraining in crisis management and hostage situations.

Retraining is due to start on June 17.

A PNP official said SPD investigators are now just waiting for the results of the paraffin and ballistics tests conducted on the 21 Pasay policemen, before the erring lawmen can be charged with reckless imprudence resulting in homicide.

"(The test results) will serve as the basis for the filing of the criminal charges," said Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina.

Espina said the number of policemen to be charged would depend on the outcome of the paraffin and ballistics tests.

He said the police's main evidence consisted of the video footage of the two-hour hostage drama, the result of the paraffin and ballistics tests, and the testimony of the lawmen and witnesses.

The drama was televised live and replayed on national TV. It drew public outrage over the lawmen's failure to disable hostage-taker Talvo after he seized the boy in the bus station Friday.

Talvo was gunned down only after he repeatedly stabbed Balala. The boy died from knife and gunshot wounds.

The National Police Commission is also looking into reports that the lawmen who responded to Friday's hostage incident were drunk.

"I have ordered some of my men to investigate this since this might constitute neglect of duty," said Rogelio Pureza, Napolcom vice chair and executive officer.

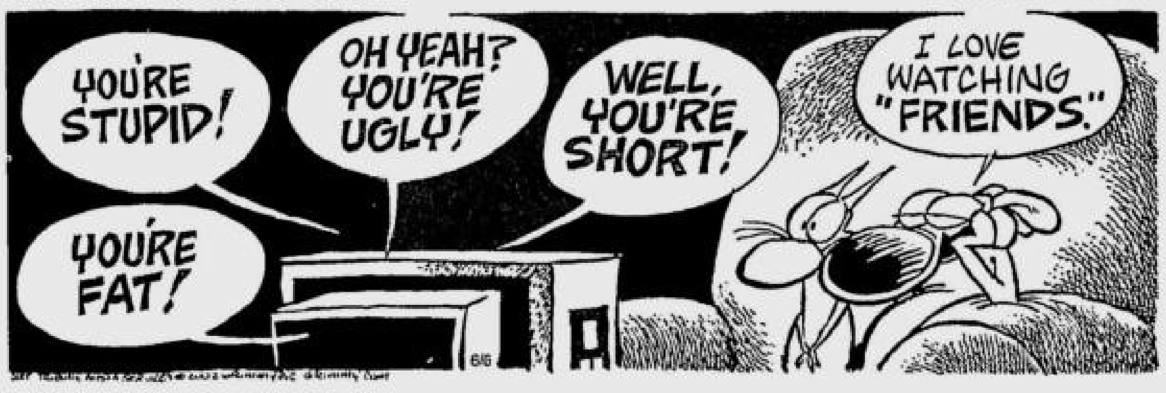
Pureza told the Inquirer in a phone interview Tuesday night that he has ordered his men go to the East Asia KTV Club on Roxas Boulevard and talk to the waiters and ask if there were any policemen drinking that night.

It was earlier reported that some responding members of the Pasay police might have been drunk. A vehicle of the Pasay City police Special Weapons and Tactics unit was spotted parked outside the club a few hours before the incident. Some reporters on the scene also claimed that the policemen who responded to the incident were reeking with liquor.

Supt. Dela Cerna earlier told his superiors that his men were indeed at the club that night, but they were merely enforcing the ban against illegal firearms prior to the Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


YOU'RE STUPID!
OH YEAH? YOU'RE UGLY!
WELL, YOU'RE SHORT!
YOU'RE FAT!
I LOVE WATCHING "FRIENDS."
6/6

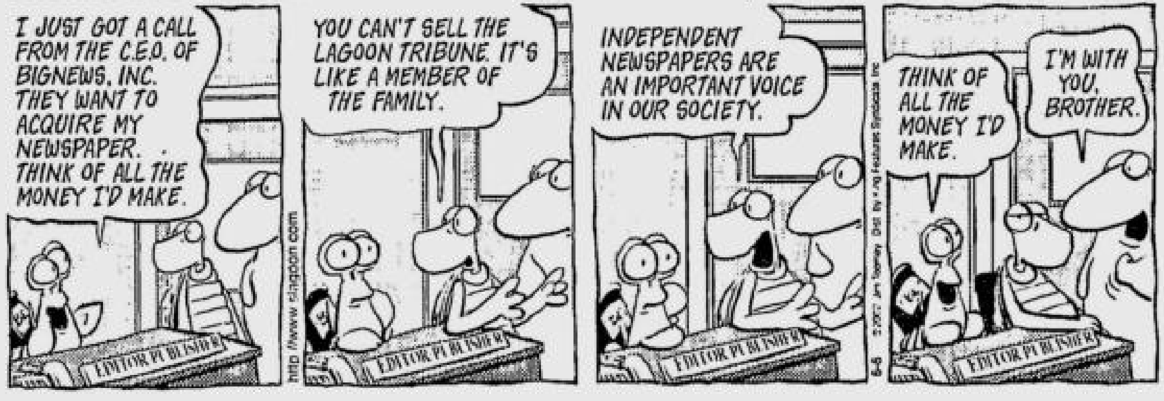
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

Hey, WeBoy. I'M SORRY FOR BeING SO UN-PROFESSIONAL the other DAY. I DECIDED to MAKE it up to YOU.
SO TA-DAH! THIS IS AGENT CUM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JAZZMIN! SHE WILL HELP US MAKE OUR CIRCUS ACT A BIG HIT!
OKAY. I'VE STUDIED YOUR CASE AND I SUGGEST SOME CHANGES. WeBoy, YOU'LL MAKE A GREAT STAR AND Atomo A WONDERFUL SIDEKICK.
YOU'RE FIRED!
YOU'RE HIRED!

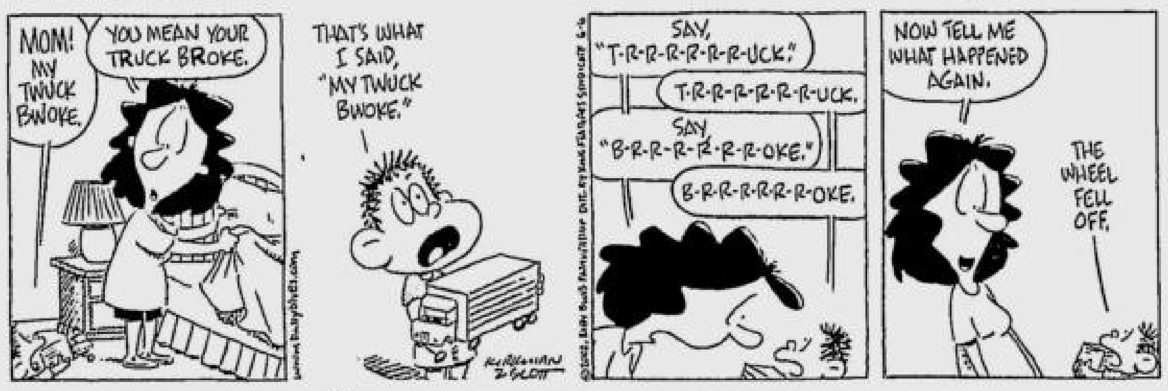
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


I JUST GOT A CALL FROM THE C.E.O. OF BIGNEWS, INC. THEY WANT TO ACQUIRE MY NEWSPAPER. THINK OF ALL THE MONEY I'D MAKE.
YOU CAN'T SELL THE LAGOON TRIBUNE. IT'S LIKE A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.
INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS ARE AN IMPORTANT VOICE IN OUR SOCIETY.
THINK OF ALL THE MONEY I'D MAKE.
I'M WITH YOU, BROTHER.
EDITOR PUBLISHER
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM! MY TWUCK BWOKE.
YOU MEAN YOUR TRUCK BROKE.
THAT'S WHAT I SAID, "MY TWUCK BWOKE."
SAY, "T-R-R-R-R-R-R-UCK."
T-R-R-R-R-R-R-UCK.
SAY, "B-R-R-R-R-R-R-OKE."
B-R-R-R-R-R-R-OKE.
NOW TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED AGAIN.
THE WHEEL FELL OFF.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sandra Bernhard, Bjorn Borg, Roy Innis, Staci Keanan

Happy Birthday: You will have greater insight into matters pertaining to work this year. You mustn't let personal problems interfere with your work. Problems with medications are likely. Psychosomatic illness is evident. Expressing your beliefs and working toward a worthwhile cause will bring you the most satisfaction this year. Your numbers are 2, 15, 29, 31, 36, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't let your emotions take over and lead you into temptation or trouble today. Keep your thoughts to yourself and let others do the gossiping.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be careful not to divulge secret information. Someone you are close to may get the wrong impression. This may not be the best day to initiate change.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): There will be electricity in the air if you attend functions that have a worthy cause. Someone you meet will interest you and sparks will fly.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Take great care if you are working with others today. You may find yourself being blamed for something you didn't do. Legal matters should be dealt with.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Being in a totally different environment will do wonders for you today. You need to bring a little excitement back into your life. It's time to try something new.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You've got a good eye today when it comes to moneymaking ventures. Investments will pay back if you are patient. Check out small business opportunities.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Partnerships will develop and all sorts of new possibilities will be offered to you. Be ready to take command and make a decision. If you waffle today you will have many regrets in the future.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your ability to organize and pull things together will be a key factor in how much you accomplish. You will need to put a little time aside for rest and relaxation.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): A romantic encounter will lead to a pleasurable set of circumstances. You should feel vibrant and willing to try things that you normally wouldn't. Your confidence will make you irresistible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll have to be careful what you say to whom today. Don't be so trusting when dealing with colleagues. Someone you work with may be jealous of you. Don't overreact.

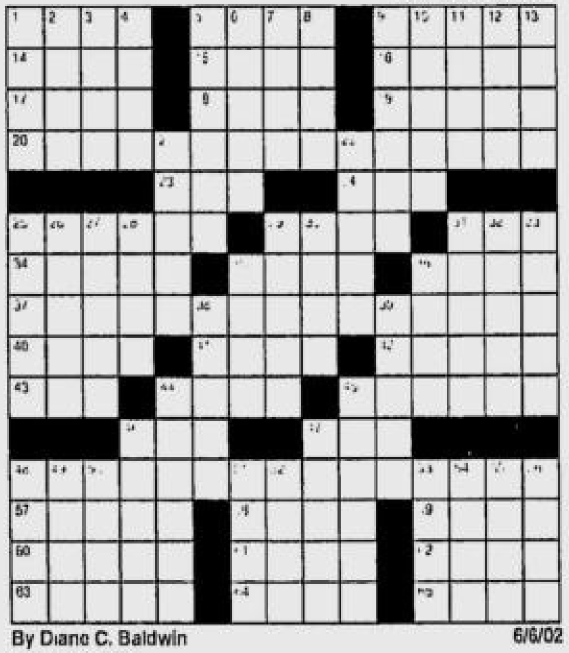
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The more involved you get in something that you believe in, the better. Your opinions will change with the information you acquire. Attend cultural events in order to learn about different backgrounds.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may want to rethink your current direction in life if you aren't totally happy with your vocation. Let your intuition guide you. Changes in your home will be beneficial.

Birthday Baby: You will delve into unconventional areas. You will enjoy entertainment that is refined and intellectual. You will be artistic, and should pursue creative hobbies.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



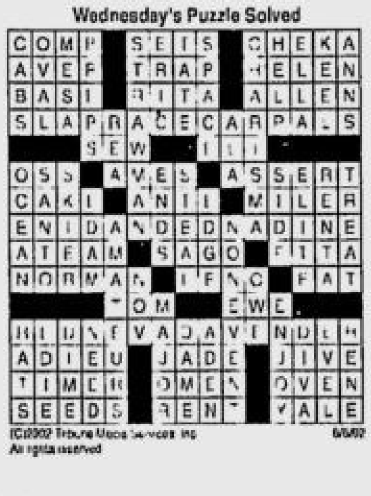
By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

6/6/02

ACROSS
1 Pizzazz
5 Zippy
9 Ardent in the extreme
14 Top Norse god
15 Burn balm
16 Sidestep
17 Earthenware jar
18 Round in a contest
19 Old computer language
20 Is stymied
23 Mineral matter
24 __ Angeles
25 Bribe money
29 Pelt
31 King or carte lead-in
34 Steer clear of
35 Sink alternative?
36 My word!
37 Exhausts possibilities
40 Electrical measures
41 Stocking mishaps
42 Dice
43 Utter
44 Urban oasis
45 Resentful
46 Muhammad of boxing
47 Storage unit
48 Becomes hemmed in
57 Speak in a formal manner
58 In the past
59 Cellist Ma
60 Hell's Angel, e.g.
61 Resting on
62 Cruising
63 Visionaries
64 Puts on
65 Geek

DOWN
1 Whiz along
2 Doing nothing
3 River of Sudan
4 Tiny flier
5 North African expanse
6 Academy frosh
7 Niagara noise
8 Abominable snowman
9 Calculate
10 Swears
11 __ au rhum
12 Graven image
13 Small valley
21 Brogan bottoms
22 Regional weather
25 Rio Grande feeder
26 Island greeting
27 Scrumptious
28 Pindar poetry
29 Posh
30 Future nannies
31 Emissary
32 Cyclist Armstrong
33 Venomous viper
35 Like Aesop's grapes
36 Amend a draft
38 Prepare to compete
39 __ acid
44 Hand tool for holding
45 Arm bulge
46 Fall bloom
47 BLT ingredient
48 Sailors
49 One part of HOMES
50 Proceeds
51 Warty critter
52 Aware of
53 Fastball pitcher Nolan
54 Cyrano's distinguishing feature
55 One watching
56 Thoroughfare

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



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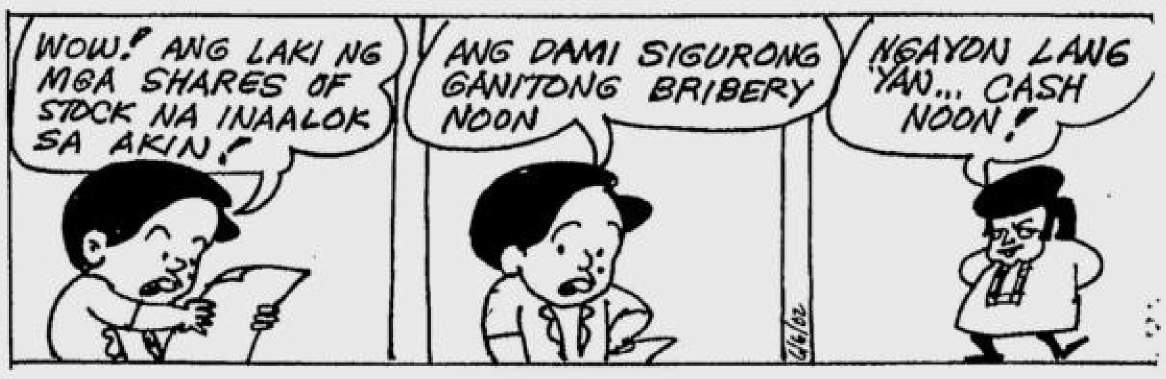
6/5/02

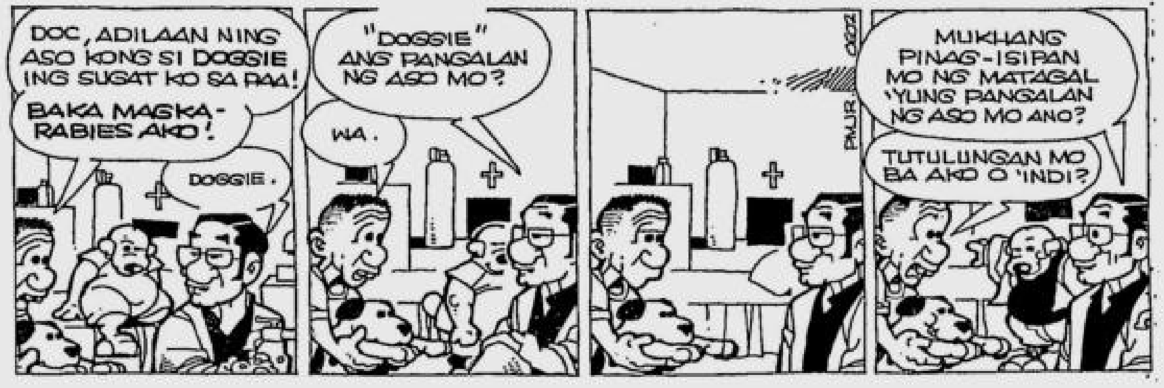
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WOW! ANG LAKI NG MGA SHARES OF STOCK NA INAALOK SA AKIN!
ANG DAMI SIGURONG GANITONG BRIBERY NOON
NGAYON LANG YAN... CASH NOON!
6/6/02

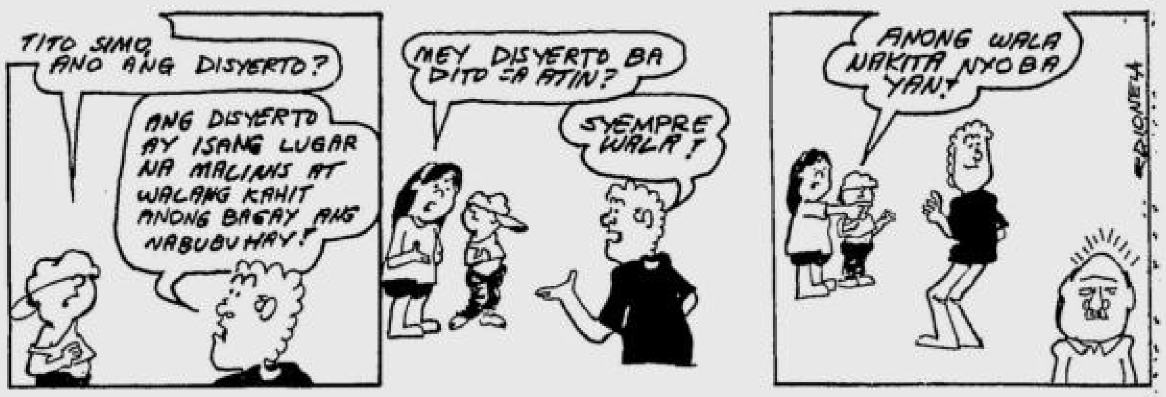
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DOC, ADILAAN NING ASO KONG SI DOGGIE ING SUGAT KO SA PAA!
BAKA MAGKA-RABIES AKO!
DOGGIE.
"DOGGIE" ANG PANGALAN NG ASO MO?
WA.
MUKHANG PINAG-ISIPAN MO NG MATAGAL 'YUNG PANGALAN NG ASO MO ANO?
TUTULUNGAN MO BA AKO O 'INDI?

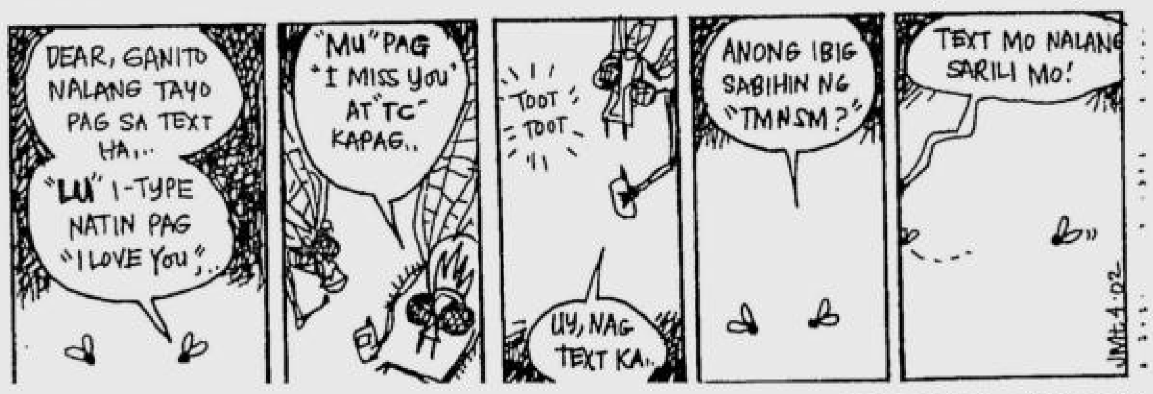
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


TITO SIMO, ANO ANG DISYERTO?
ANG DISYERTO AY ISANG LUGAR NA MALINIS AT WALANG KAHIT ANONG BAGAY ANG NABUBUHAY!
MEY DISYERTO BA DITO SA ATIN?
SYEMPRE WALA!
ANONG WALA NAKITA NYO BA YAN!
DIONELA

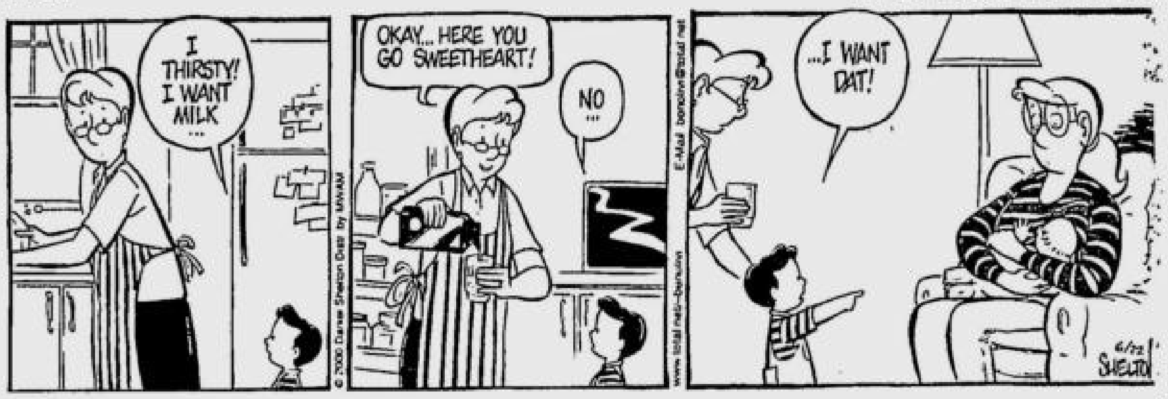
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DEAR, GANITO NALANG TAYO PAG SA TEXT HA...
"LU" I-TYPE NATIN PAG "I LOVE YOU"...
"MU" PAG "I MISS YOU" AT "TC" KAPAG..
TOOT TOOT
UY, NAG TEXT KA..
ANONG IBIG SABIHIN NG "TMNSM?"
TEXT MO NALANG SARILI MO!
JMT 4.02

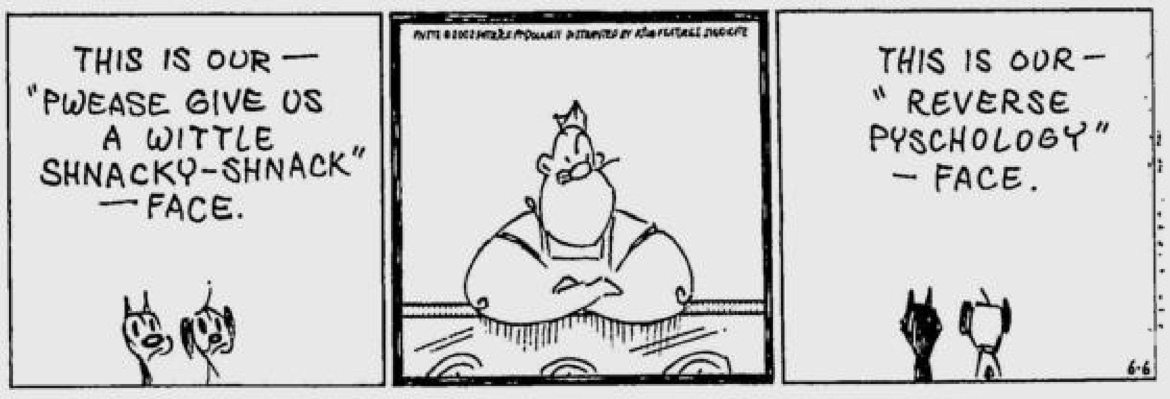
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I THIRSTY! I WANT MILK ...
OKAY... HERE YOU GO SWEETHEART!
NO ...
...I WANT DAT!
SHELTON

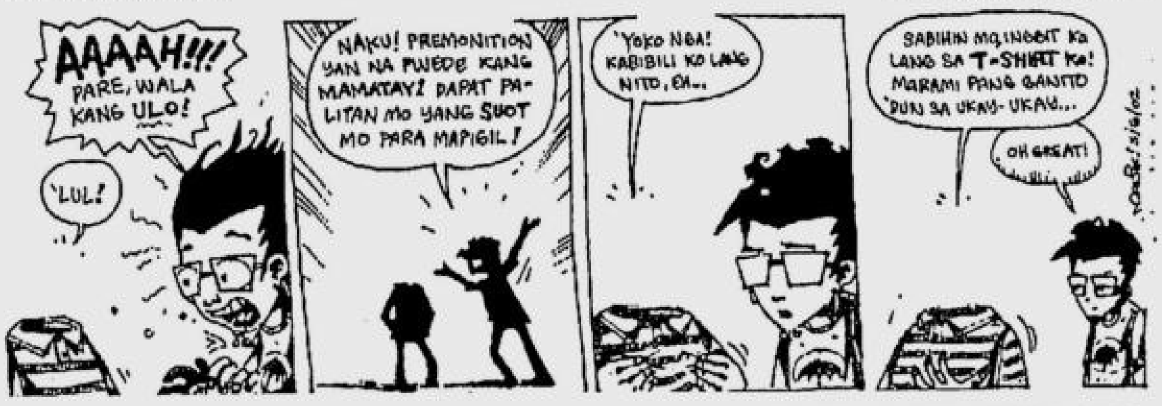
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS OUR — "PWEASE GIVE US A WITTLE SHNACKY-SHNACK" — FACE.
THIS IS OUR — "REVERSE PYSCHOLOGY" — FACE.
6-6

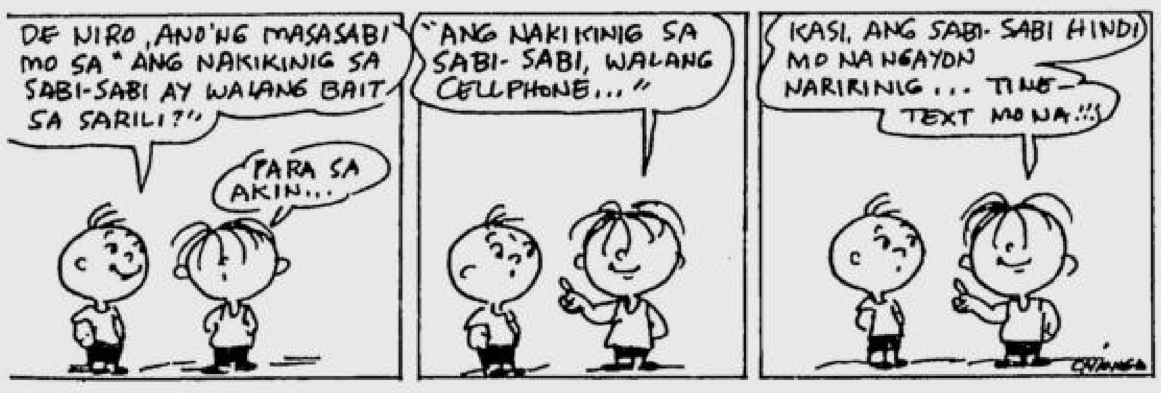
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AAAAH!!! PARE, WALA KANG ULO!
'LUL!
NAKU! PREMONITION YAN NA PWEDE KANG MAMATAY! DAPAT PALITAN MO YANG SUOT MO PARA MAPIGIL!
'YOKO NGA! KABIBILI KO LANG NITO, EH..
SABIHIN MO, INGGIT KA LANG SA T-SHIRT KO! MARAMI PANG GANITO 'DUN SA UKAY-UKAY...
OH GREAT!

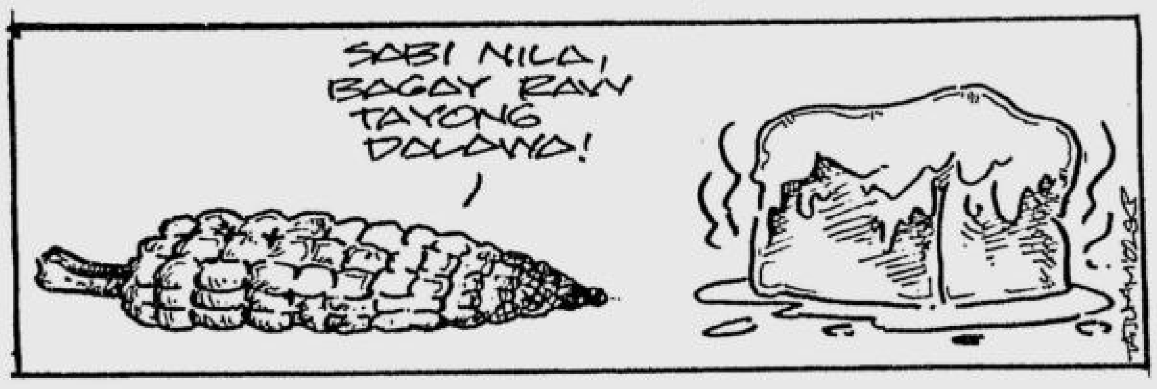
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, ANO'NG MASASABI MO SA "ANG NAKIKINIG SA SABI-SABI AY WALANG BAIT SA SARILI?"
PARA SA AKIN...
"ANG NAKIKINIG SA SABI-SABI, WALANG CELLPHONE..."
KASI, ANG SABI-SABI HINDI MO NA NGAYON NARIRINIG... TINE-TEXT MO NA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SABI NILA, BAGAY RAW TAYONG DALAWA!

"SEX and the City" girls Kristin Davis, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kim Catrall.

'Sex' just keeps getting better

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

"Sex and the City"
HBO, Tuesdays, 10 p.m.

I COULDN'T help overhearing a conversation between two smart-looking women while I was resting on a mall bench. They were talking about how good Sarah Jessica Parker was in "Sex and the City" but they agreed that "there's just too much sex."

Gigantic "Duh"!

From that moment on, I managed to tune them out. The point, evidently, was lost on the pair, because that's exactly what the show is all about: Four career women's stories about their conquests, relationships and misadventures in New York.

"Sex . . ." is a brainchild of Darren Star, formerly known for creating the schlocky "Melrose Place" who occasionally writes for the award-winning cable show. A small pool of writers pen their own experiences (as well as their friends'), the fictional characters acting as conduits for real-life situations.

If sexual truth is stranger than fiction, it's because it usually is. This results in well-executed (if a bit embellished) storylines, with countless situations that reverberate among mature viewers. I say "mature" because you'll either get it or you won't, or you're too repressed by the idea of strong-willed, promiscuous women.

Enlightening

The groundbreaking HBO sitcom focuses on four characters. Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker) is the sex columnist who does voice-over narration throughout the show, her thoughts evaluating the growth that she and her friends undergo in each episode. Charlotte York (Kristin Davis) is the contradictory "traditional yet adventurous" art dealer. Miranda Hobbes (Cynthia Nixon) is the wisecracking cynical lawyer. Samantha Jones (Kim Catrall) is the fiery, fearless PR representative.

They form a tight friendship, supporting each other through good times and crappy times, comparing notes that define their characters through every weekly installment.

The enlightening female perspectives provide the show its strength and significance. Carrie's strong and analytical disposition becomes a façade every time she and recurring boyfriend Mr. Big (Chris Noth) hook up. Their on-again, off-again relationship becomes almost like an addiction to her. When she's not in that scenario, however, she's the epitome of confidence and control, dumping men left and right for some reason or another.

The lusty women have casual relations with diverse men, ranging from decent ones to weirdos (one wants to do it in places where there's a big risk of getting caught). But they sometimes find themselves in relationships that can be equated with real companionship.

Dysfuncion and STD

Although Samantha's the most daring among the four, none of her relationships really last, whether it's her own choice or her partners'. She had a deeper thing going on with an African-American lover for a time in the previous season, but the man's sister disapproved of the interracial pairing.

Miranda tried to make a relationship work, but couldn't muster enough strength to let her guard down or face the pressure of being with the man she loves for the long haul.

Charlotte's woes regarding her husband's psychologically induced erectile dysfunction caused them to separate, but in the current season, they've reunited in sexual bliss (for as long as the creative team deems it fit) despite being estranged.

There's also the all-too-real concern of venereal disease in the show (yes, bed-hopping can be dangerous). An episode, for example, has Miranda tracking down an ex-boyfriend who may have given her a sexually-transmitted illness (albeit a curable one). She had to list the names of dozens of men she slept with, and the one she couldn't remember (or didn't ask) was just written as "guy from deli."

Samantha also had a close call. She fainted when she thought her AIDS test was positive.

Both cases speak volumes of the show's realism, and the necessity of consequence.

Nudity and F word

The new season is as thought-provokingly funny as the preceding ones, judging from the three recent episodes they aired over HBO Asia.

It seems that Carrie is unintentionally giving Mr. Big a taste of his non-committal medicine. Samantha seems to be starting a lesbian relationship with an artist, Maria (Sonia Braga), giving audiences another side to her that hasn't been explored yet (Carrie had a kiss with a girl played by Alanis Morissette while playing "bisexual spin-the-bottle" last season, but nothing really came out of it). Miranda and her "boundaries" issues are wittily tackled (when her boyfriend answers the call of nature within her perimeter), and Charlotte finally has the guts to look at her reproductive organ in the mirror (she hasn't done this because of an insecurity).

There are scenes that involve nudity or touching that are noticeably edited out but the "f" and "s" words thankfully aren't.

Bleeped

The show's past seasons are being shown on a local channel, but they're not worth watching. Important scenes have been removed, and the word "sex" during conversations is bleeped off. That's just downright insulting.

"Sex and the City" is one of a few programs that can be identified with seemingly unconnected ones like "Oprah" or "Felicity." These shows empower women, and give them many voices and forums for their thoughts and experiences. It's about time, too, as this kind of concept for "Sex . . ." would have been shot down only a few decades ago (hallelujah for cable TV!). "Sex . . ." also dissects the behavior of different men in current times.

Leave your inhibitions elsewhere and keep an open mind when you watch the show. It can only be appreciated that way. It's an important series because it's about consenting adults whose sex lives could mirror your own.

Come on. You know you want it.

Never a bad hair day for Pin

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

"THANKS to **Pin Antonio** of Salon de Manila for my hairstyle."

That line has become every glam-looking celebrity's "famous last words." It's almost like a refrain you hear over and over again, and short of saying that you're not "in" if your hair is not done by Pin.

Stars like **Kris Aquino, Pops Fernandez**, **Jaya**, **Bing Loyzaga, Amy Perez** and the whole "Magandang Tanghali Bayan" cast sport the signature Pin A. look.

Pin had been telling me I needed a new look but our schedules just couldn't meet, until last weekend.

Pin is fresh from her victory in the Davines World Style Contest Asian Finals held in Singapore. She won for the "unrestricted with triad coloring" hairstyle of her sultry model, **Emma Ruiz**.

Pin will go on to compete with the rest of the world's representatives in Rome in November in the Davines World Style Contest Finals.

Pin, it turned out, is short for "Filipina." She was really meant to represent the country and show the rest of the world that we can be No. 1 not just in texting.

Did you always want to be a hairdresser?

Pin: I used to help out my sister Ruby in her salon when she was still alive. I was bent on continuing her legacy after she died. Watching her do her thing fascinated me. Even as a kid I would cut my dolls' hair and style it. In school, I loved cutting and fixing my classmates' hair. I don't like to think of myself as someone big. I'm doing this for God's glory, making full use of the talent He has blessed me with.

Hairstylists are usually privy to stars' deepest secrets because stars spend so much time in the parlor. How do you draw the line between friendship and your professional relationship with your star clients?

I'm lucky that my *suki na mga* stars have no attitude problems and so we get along easily. I'm flattered that they trust me enough to let me cut or style their hair as I see fit. I even give them advice on what to wear that will complement their hairstyle. It's the total look I'm after. *Sayang lang kung maganda nga ang* hairdo *mo, 'di naman bagay 'yung damit mo*. For instance, I told Amy Perez not to wear sundresses on "MTB." The hairstyle and color I gave her go well with blazers and polos.

The stars know that what they tell me in confidence will remain between us. I give my staff strict instructions not to make *chika* to others whatever they hear in my salon.

How do you deal with walk-in customers who insist that they want to copy the haircut of a certain celebrity client of yours even if it would not fit them?

I tell them straight but in a nice way. You see, there are a lot of things to consider before cutting hair. The face shape, hair texture and the head's bone structure. *Hindi puwede yung basta mo lang gayahin ang isang* hairstyle just for the heck of it. I compromise with them by saying the front can look like, say Kris's hairstyle but the back will have a different cut. *Pag pinilit pa rin nila*, I kid them and say, "You better sign an agreement first that if you don't like what becomes of your hair I won't be held liable because I already warned you that it wouldn't fit you."

How about politician's wives and some mistresses? Any interesting anecdotes?

I get shocked sometimes when some wives would interrogate me, asking if their husband's mistresses came to my salon. Funny thing is, some of them even want to copy the mistresses' hairstyle!

How do you deal with a bad hair day? Do you ever have one?

I make sure I'm a walking ad for my salon. But my routine is simple. Wash and wear. I just put Davines gel and off I go. Even if my hair is short, I can tousle it in such a way that it can have several different looks. If you get a good cut with precision haircutting, which is my forte, you won't have a bad hair day.

Who would you consider your biggest rival in the hairstyling biz?

There's room for everybody. We all have our own specialties. I don't compare my salon to other salons. I just keep on striving to improve by going abroad twice a year to study new techniques.

Who's the easiest star to style?

PIN UP GIRL. Pin Antonio

Bing Loyzaga

What's your favorite creation among all the celebrity hairstyles you've done?

All of them are special but the one I got the most calls about were **Zsa Zsa Padilla**'s flyaway flip and Jaya's blunt cut.

Don't you consider visiting the parlor frequently a sin because it might make one too vain?

Vanity is different from looking and feeling good. It's vanity when you can't step out of the house without make-up or your hair all coiffed up. You'll be surprised that when the economy went down, my clients increased. My customers say, "*Mahina ang negosyo. Gawin mo akong mukhang mayaman para 'di halata na marami akong problema at utang.*"

For feedback, e-mail friends_at _dsquare@yahoo.com

Their first films

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MANY gifted actors have a hard time breaking into TV-film stardom. Some of them never make it, and resign themselves to playing bit roles, or give up completely. That's why stars' first breaks in the biz are interesting to delve into.

Take **Richard Gene**: He started out as a practically anonymous rock, blues and country musician who played different instruments for a number of bands. When he realized he wasn't getting anywhere fast, he acted in summer stock, where his good looks and talent were finally noticed.

He landed the lead role in "Grease" in 1972, and went on to star in the London production of the hit musical. This led to the movie offers that he'd long been waiting for—"Baby Blue Marine" in 1976, "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" in 1977, "Days of Heaven" in 1978, and "American Gigolo" in 1980. He was still a long way away from "Ghost," but he was clearly on his way.

Steve Martin took up theater arts in college, and wrote gags for the Smothers Brothers' TV show. He went on to do stand-up comedy on "Saturday Night Live" and the "Tonight" show, and did so well that the movies beckoned soon enough.

He made his big-screen debut singing "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" in the Beatles film, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" in 1978. Next, he wrote and played the lead in **Carl Reiner**'s "The Jerk." Reiner was also responsible for other zany Martin starrers like "The Man with Two Brains" and "Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid."

Denzel Washington was acting in the TV drama series "St. Elsewhere" when he was offered his first movie role, as the implausible son of **George Segal** in "Carbon Copy" (1981). In time, however, he made up for that skittish start by winning the best supporting actor Oscar for his performance in "Glory."

Meg Ryan's mother was a casting director, so she didn't lack for opportunities to audition and show what she could do. Still, stardom wasn't handed to her on a silver platter.

She made her debut as **Candice Bergen**'s daughter in "Rich and Famous" (1981), before studying journalism at New York University. She paid for her tuition by acting on the TV soap, "As the World Turns." But she soon decided that acting was what she was really good at, so she went back to it.

Soon, she was impressing viewers in the small but significant part of the wife of **Anthony Edwards** in "Top Gun" (1986). She became a star with "Harry Met Sally" (1989). It was her idea to include the comical fake orgasm scene.

After studying drama at Boston University, **Geena Davis** worked as a salesgirl and model before landing a small part in "Tootsie" in 1982. She has since been nominated for Oscars, winning as best supporting actress for her portrayal of an oddball dog trainer in "The Accidental Tourist" in 1988.

Films on Star Movies

THURSDAY, June 6 at 9 p.m., "Drive Me Crazy" with **Melissa Joan Hart**, **Adrian Grenier** and **Stephen Collins**. At 10:30 p.m., "The Simian Line" with **Harry Connick Jr.**, **Cindy Crawford** and **Lynn Redgrave**.

Friday, June 7 at 10:45 p.m., "Bootmen" with **Adam Garcia**.

Saturday, June 8 at 7 p.m., "High Fidelity" with **John Cusack**, **Jack Black** and **Lisa Bonet**. At 9 p.m., "Dead Presidents" with **Larenz Tate** and **Chris Tucker**.

Sunday, June 9 at 7:30 p.m., "Woman on Top" with **Penelope Cruz**.

Monday, June 10 at 9 p.m., "National Lampoon's Men in White" with **Barry Botswick**.

Tuesday, June 11 at 9 p.m., "The Hurricane" with **Denzel Washington**.

Wednesday, June 12 at 6 p.m., "American Tragedy" with **Ving Rhames**, **Ron Silver** and **Bruno Kirby**.

Muhammad Ali's 60th birthday celebration

ON Sunday, June 9 at 8 a.m.; Star World will replay its tribute to **Muhammad Ali** on his 60th birthday. Hosted by **Will Smith**, the one-hour special honors the heavyweight champion who brought unprecedented speed and grace to his sport.

Joining Smith to present filmclips of Ali's legendary career are **Angela Bassett**, **Jamie Foxx**, **Cuba Gooding Jr.**, **Samuel L. Jackson**, **Sidney Poitier**, **Sylvester Stallone**, **Jon Voight**, **Sugar Ray Leonard**, **John Travolta**, **Larry King**, and **Layla Ali**, the champion boxer's daughter.

There will also be musical performances by **India Aire**, **Mariah Carey**, **Natalie Cole**, **Paul Simon** with Ladysmith Black Mombazo, and N'Sync.

New station ID

JUST in time for the rainy season, El Niño or no El Niño, ABS-CBN has launched its new station ID, "Umulan, Umaraw, Magkasama Tayo." The network's stars brave the "downpour" to vivify rainy season vignettes.

Dolphy sings and dances in the rain ala **Gene Kelly**. **Sharon Cuneta** enjoys a cup of coffee, **Kris Aquino** waits for **Boy Abunda** to seek cover from a sudden shower, and **Jolina Magdangal** dances in a drizzle.

The new ID took 11 days to shoot. It was produced by ABS-CBN's Corporate Communications Management group and the network's Special Projects group.

Other ABS-CBN stars featured in the three-minute ID include **Maricel Soriano**, **Lorna Tolentino**, **Aga Muhlach**, **Martin Nievera**, **Johnny Delgado**, **Diether Ocampo**, **Marvin Agustin**, **Joyce Jimenez**, **Edu Manzano**, **Ricky Davao** and **Charo Santos-Concio**.

The ID features "Sukob Na," a song written by **Fransco Mortiz** and **Alexeeb Flores**, and performed by Star Records' top boy band, 17:28.

CA denies injunction petition vs GMA Network

THE COURT of Appeals denied on May 21 the application of ABS-CBN broadcasting Corporation and Luisita "Luchi" Cruz-Valdes for the issuance of a temporary restraining order and/or writ of injunction to lift or suspend the preliminary injunction issued by Hon. Judge Rogelio M. Pizarro, presiding judge of Branch 222 of the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City against ABS-CBN and Valdes, enjoining them from carrying on and continuing with the contract for services of Valdes with ABS-CBN.

GMA Network Inc. filed a case for breach of contract against Valdes and a case for contractual interference against ABS-CBN in the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, after Valdes abandoned her talent agreement with GMA and transferred to ABS-CBN when the rival network pirated her.

Pizarro issued the writ of preliminary injunction to prevent the disclosure by Valdes of GMA's confidential information and/or trade secrets to ABS-CBN.

ABS-CBN and Valdes elevated to the Court of Appeals the injunction issued by Pizarro against them.

The Court of Appeals sustained the injunction issued by Pizarro and held that the "principal injunctive relief sought by ABS-CBN and Valdes would render the case moot and academic since the evil sought to be prevented by the writ of preliminary injunction in question would be accomplished by the lifting of the said writ.

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173869

1	DRAGONFLY
2	WALANG IBA . . .
3	RESIDENT EVIL
4	MURDER BY NUMBERS
5	A WALK TO REMEMBER
6	CASS & CARY
7	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
8	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	A WALK TO REMEMBER
2	DRAGONFLY
3	MURDER BY NUMBERS
4	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
5	RESIDENT EVIL
6	JIHAD WARRIOR
7	STAR WARS
8	PANIC ROOM
9	CASS & CARY
10	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	DRAGONFLY
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	JIHAD WARRIOR
4	STAR WARS
5	RESIDENT EVIL
6	CASS & CARY
7	A WALK TO REMEMBER
8	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
9	WALANG IBA . . .
10	40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS
11	SELDA
12	PANIC ROOM

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	STAR WARS
2	PANIC ROOM
3	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
4	A WALK TO REMEMBER
5	MURDER BY NUMBERS
6	RESIDENT EVIL
7	WALANG IBA . . .
8	SELDA
9	CASS & CARY
10	DRAGONFLY
11	JIHAD WARRIOR
12	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	PANIC ROOM
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	RESIDENT EVIL
4	A WALK TO REMEMBER
5	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
6	DRAGONFLY
7	WALANG IBA . . .
8	JIHAD WARRIOR
9	CASS & CARY
10	STAR WARS
11	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
12	SELDA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	RESIDENT EVIL
2	STAR WARS
3	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
4	CASS & CARY
5	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
6	DRAGONFLY
7	MURDER BY NUMBRS
8	A WALK TO REMEMBER
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8086888

1	DRAGONFLY
2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
3	A WALK TO REMEMBER
4	MURDER BY NUMBERS
5	SELDA
6	WALANG IBA . . .
7	CASS & CARY
8	RESIDENT EVIL
9	STAR WARS
10	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS

SM CITY CEBU
2313878

1	STAR WARS
2	JIHAD WARRIOR
3	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
4	SNOW DOGS
5	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
6	FRUIT IS SWELLING
7	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
8	CASS & CARY

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	BENEATH LOCHNESS
2	CLOSED
3	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
4	JASON-X
5	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
6	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
7	CLOSED
8	HELP I'M A FISH

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	RESIDENT EVIL
2	JIHAD WARRIOR
3	DFRAGONFLY
4	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
5	LIGAYA PANTASYA . . .
6	CASS & CARY

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	A WALK TO REMEMBER
4	DRAGONFLY

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	MURDER BY NUMBERS
2	DRAGONFLY
3	CASS & CARY
4	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	JASON-X
2	HARDBALL
3	SNOW DOGS
4	BENEATH TO LOCHNESS
5	DEEP END
6	CROSSROADS

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City

1	MURDER BY NUMBERS
2	A WALK TO REMEMBER

W/ LATE NIGHT SCREENING ON WEEKENDS 6389781-85

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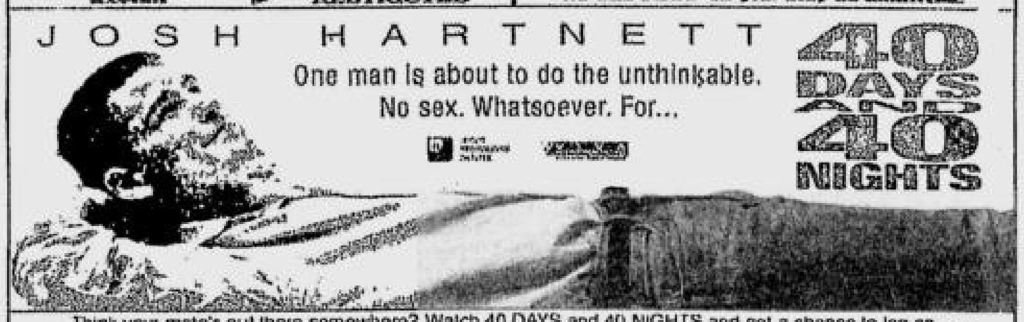
the all-digital-sound

AYALA CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1 & 4 / GREENBELT 1 & 3
ALABANG TOWN CENTER

NOW SHOWING


JOSH HARTNETT
One man is about to do the unthinkable.
No sex. Whatsoever. For...
40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS

Think your mate's out there somewhere? Watch 40 DAYS and 40 NIGHTS and get a chance to log on to www.match.ph . Match.ph--where people meet.

match.ph
Where people meet...

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OUTBACK

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOS)	RESIDENT EVIL
2 (SDDS)	PANIC ROOM
3 (DTS)	STAR WARS
4 GOLD (DTS)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	WALK TO REMEMBER
6 GOLD (SDDS)	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	DRAGONFLY
8	CASS & CARY
9	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
10	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA 2040
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	CASS & CARY

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	CASS & CARY
3	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
5	SELDA

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1	RESIDENT EVIL
2	PAGSALUHAN NATIN
3	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
4	CASS & CARY
5	DRAGONFLY
6	MURDER BY NUMBERS
7	
8	

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1	MURDER BY NUMBERS

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	STAR WARS
2	SPIDER-MAN

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
3	SELDA

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	SELDA
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	CASS & CARY
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
2	
3	
4	SELDA
5	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
6	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
7 (DTS)	CASS & CARY
8 (SDDS)	DRAGONFLY
9 (DOLBY)	A WALK TO REMEMBER

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	SELDA

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	CASS & CARY
3	SELDA
4 (SDDS)	DRAGONFLY
5	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
6 (DOLBY)	RESIDENT EVIL
7 (DTS)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
8	STAR WARS
9	

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	
2	
3	
4	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
5 (SDDS)	CASS & CARY
6	MURDER BY NUMBERS
7 (DOLBY)	DRAGONFLY
8	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	CASS & CARY
2	SELDA
3 (DTS)	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
4	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
5 (SDDS)	MURDER BY NUMBERS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	CASS & CARY

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	CASS & CARY

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
Lords	SELDA
Jennet	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	CASS & CARY
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
2	CASS & CARY
3	
4	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
5	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	OPENS JUNE 12 UTANG NI TATANG
2	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	SELDA
2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	
2	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	CASS & CARY
3 (DTS)	DRAGONFLY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	CASS & CARY
2 (DTS)	RESIDENT EVIL
3 (DOLBY)	DRAGONFLY
4	MURDER BY NUMBERS

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	CASS & CARY
2 (DOLBY)	DRAGONFLY
3 (DTS)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
4	JIHAD WARRIOR

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	STAR WARS
3	
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	K-PAX
3 (DOLBY)	JIHAD WARRIOR
4 (DTS)	DEATH TO SMOOCHY

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	SELDA
3	CASS & CARY
4 (DTS)	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	DRAGONFLY
2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
3 (DTS)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
4	CASS & CARY
5	LIGAYA PANTASYA . . .

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	MURDER BY NUMBERS
2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
3	CASS & CARY

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	MURDER BY NUMBERS
2	CASS & CARY
3	DRAGONFLY

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	STARS WARS
2	SPIDER-MAN
3	LIGAYA PANTASYA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	
2	
3	

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2 (DTS)	CASS & CARY

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	CASS & CARY
2	STAR WARS
3	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
2	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
3	JIHAD WARRIOR
4	PAGSALUHAN NATIN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	JIHAD WARRIOR
2	CASS & CARY
3 (DTS)	DRAGONFLY
4	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

PREMIERE CINEMA NOW SHOWING

THX
Murder by Numbers
CMG INTERNATIONAL

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls

NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

1 THX	A WALK TO REMEMBER
2	MURDER BY NUMBERS
3	DRAGONFLY
4	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
5	A WALK TO REMEMBER
6	RESIDENT EVIL
7	JIHAD WARRIOR
8	STAR WARS
9	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
10	PANIC ROOM

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	DRAGONFLY
2	STAR WARS 2
3	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
4	40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS
5	RESIDENT EVIL
6	MURDER BY NUMBERS
7	A WALK TO REMEMBER

Metro East -
Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	DRAGONFLY
2	PANIC ROOM
3	RESIDENT EVIL
4	A WALK TO REMEMBER
5	MURDER BY NUMBERS
6	40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS
7	STAR WARS
8	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	STAR WARS 2
2	A WALK TO REMEMBER
3	PANIC ROOM
4	RESIDENT EVIL
5	MURDER BY NUMBERS
6	40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS
7	DRAGONFLY
8	KILABOT AT KEMBOT

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	DRAGONFLY
2	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
3	MURDER BY NUMBERS
4	A WALK TO REMEMBER
5	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
6	RESIDENT EVIL

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	SHOWTIME
2	STAR WARS
3	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
4	JASON-X
5	7 DAYS TO LIVE
6	BENEATH LOCHNESS

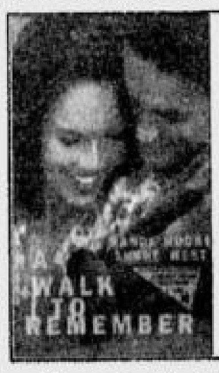
Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	STAR WARS 2
2	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
3	JASON-X
4	BENEATH LOCHNESS
5	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
6	SANA TOTOO NA

Star Mills-
Sn. Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	FRUIT IS SWELLING
2	RESIDENT EVIL
3	CASS & CARY
4	DRAGONFLY
5	JIHAD WARRIOR
6	DRAGONFLY

malabon citisquare-
soon to open.



Late Night Screening
on
June 7 - 8, 2002
Friday & Saturday -
11:00 p.m. @
Robinsons
Movieworld
Galleria

how-2-reach-us:
email: htc@netasia-mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
call-a-movie 536- 7812

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY Chivas Regal made a toast to Classmate's first anniversary with a dazzling hour-long show which was a tribute to Paris' Follies Bergere and the famed shows in Las Vegas. The show featured the Chivas Silver Sirens, professional dancers trained abroad.

Morning programs on NBN

"ALTERNATIVE is the key word in defining the main thrust of the new programs of National Broadcasting Network," explained NBN president and chair Mia Concio at the recent launch of "a.m.@NBN" and other new morning programs of the network.

"We see these new programs providing new directions to TV programming particularly the positive options. There are a variety of choices for TV to explore and NBN is a venue for alternative shows," Concio adds.

The new NBN programs, starting with the breakfast show, "a.m.@ NBN" at 7 a.m., include a business-oriented show "Business News" at 8 a.m.; an informative show "Isla Hour" at 9 a.m.; and the President's educational program, "Eskwela ng Bayan," 10 a.m.

"a.m.@NBN" is underscored by updates on the cultural and business endeavors of the Filipino-Chinese community.

The show will come with a variety of segments including regular local and international, personality profiles, health and fitness, parenting and childcare, cooking, shopping and other lifestyle and entertainment features.

Program hosts are Julie Ann Jane Dizon Andres, Maria Georgina Rocha, Mica Diva Dy Tuano and William Thio.

Segment hosts include Kimberly Tan, Michael Lim, Dong Alejar, and Shirley Barido.

"Business News" will broadcast live from the Philippine Stock Exchange, with hosts Miguel Gil and Erik Espina providing stock market updates and analysis, as well as interviews with prominent business personalities and trade authorities.

"Isla Hour" is produced by The Advocacy Channel and includes features on issues and subjects that affect people's lives, as well as government initiatives and civil society efforts that led to genuine results but are simple enough to implement and replicate.

"Eskwela ng Bayan" is a component of President Macapagal-Arroyo's poverty alleviation program addressing the educational needs of the country's marginal-ized population.

Dr. Ibarra Gonzales, former head of the Ateneo Communications Department and the Jesuit Communications Foundation, is in charge of Task Force: Eskwela ng Bayan.

A fresh look at favorite musicals.
Greenbelt Reprise, a collection of well-loved tunes and acts from the theater, featuring Katy!

Excerpts from the popular musical on the life and times of Filipino Jazz Legend, Ms. Katy dela Cruz, staged by Musical Theater Philippines.
Thursday, June 6, 2002, 7PM at the Greenbelt 1 Lobby.
Ayala Malls. Because you deserve more!
AYALA CENTER
GLORIETTA • GREENBELT
www.ayalamalls.com.ph • www.ayalaland.com.ph

OPENS JUNE 12 !
MTRCB RATING G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED
CELEBRATE FANS DAY WITH PIOLO, JOYCE AND THE ENTIRE CASTS TODAY 4:00 PM AT SAN ANDRES BUKID ONYX STREET
Si JOYCE
Meron kaya talagang "Mr. Perfect?"
I think I'm in LOVE
An Official Entry for the 2002 Manila Film Festival
Directed by Maryo J. delos Reyes
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. PRESENTATION

APAT NA BIGATING PANGALAN
ISANG PELIKULANG 'DI MALILIMUTAN
CHRISTOPHER DE LEON DINGDONG DANTES
SHARON CUNETA JUDY ANN SANTOS
MAGKAPATID
DIRECTED BY JOEL LAMANGAN
DONUTS FUJIFILM VIVA FILMS
OPENS JUNE 12 MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

For screening times, call 729-7777.
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.
AYALA CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

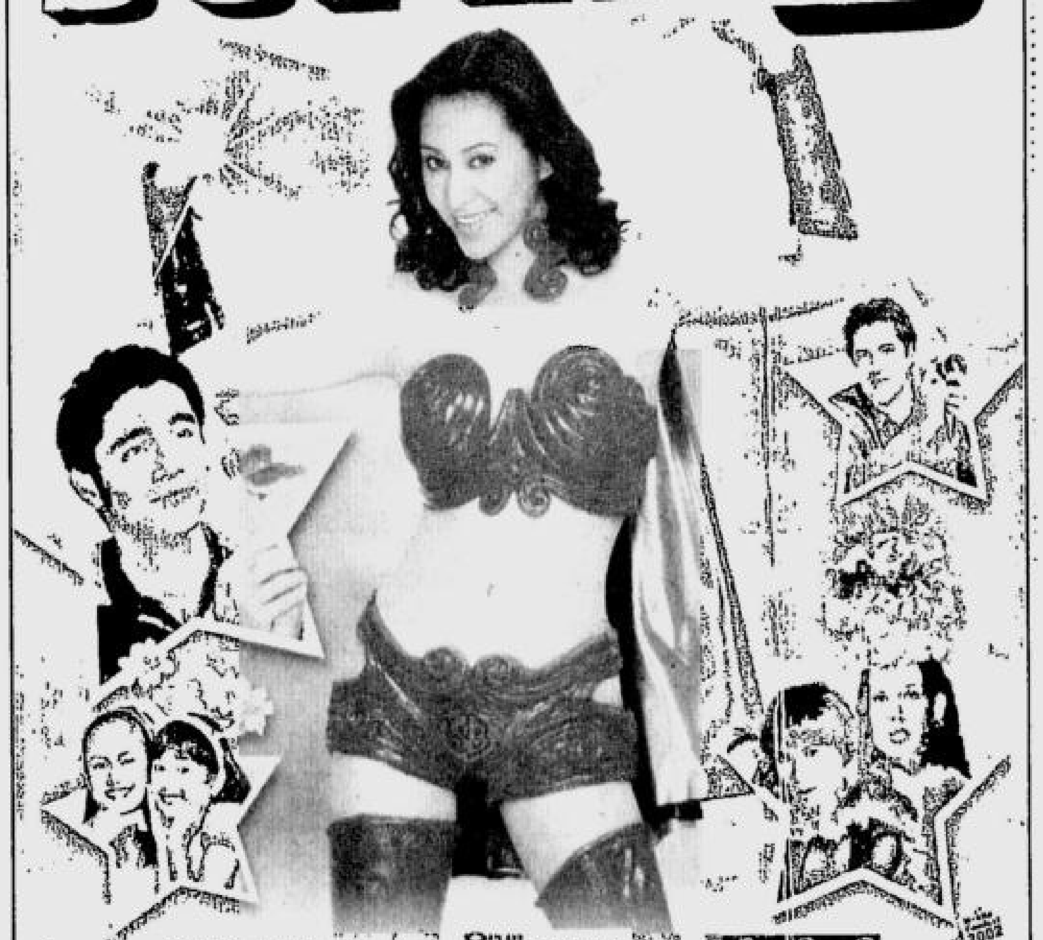
G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 CASS & CARY	1 40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS	1 40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS	1 A WALK TO REMEMBER 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20	1 MURDER BY NUMBERS
2 A WALK TO REMEMBER	2 DRAGONFLY	2 A WALK TO REMEMBER	2 MURDER BY NUMBERS 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	2 A WALK TO REMEMBER
3 KILABOT AT KEMBOT	3 MURDER BY NUMBERS 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	3 MURDER BY NUMBERS	3 DRAGONFLY 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 MURDER BY NUMBERS	4 STAR WARS: Episode 2	MARTIN NIEVERA BACK ONSTAGE 9:00 PM June 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 & 29	4 40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15	4 DRAGONFLY
	5 PANIC ROOM		5 PANIC ROOM 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	5 40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
	6 A WALK TO REMEMBER			
	7 RESIDENT EVIL			

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4" (or any Ayala Cinema) and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com.

The Ayala Malls Events
THIS WEEK'S EVENTS
MAKATI ALABANG CEBU

worship of Idols is now allowed

The Ayala Malls Father's Day Events
Makati
Nickelodeon Kids Choice Awards
Snick-A-Pick Party
June 16, 4 pm, Glorietta Activity Center
Video Me Daddy, Daddy & Me Picture, e-Postcards, Father's Day Card Making Contest
June 10-16, e-Lounge Glorietta 2
Alabang
Motor Town 2002 Car Show
June 10-19, Activity Center
Live Entertainment by Silk Band
June 15, Activity Center
Cebu
A bottle of RED Wine awaits the 1st 100 shoppers per day on June 15 & 16 upon presentation of a single purchase receipt of P500.
Ayala Malls. Because you deserve more.
Win a prize, visit www.ayalamalls.com.ph
www.ayalaland.com.ph


KELAN KA BA HULING TUMAWA, KASAMA ANG BUONG PAMILYA?
PWES 'ETO NA SI SUPER-B
HATID AY ALIW AT SAYA SA MANILA FILM FIESTA!
MARVIN AGUSTIN
MELANIE MARQUEZ MYLENE DIZON TROY MONTERO
RUFA MAE QUINTO IS
SUPER-B
DIRECTED BY JOYCE BERNAL
LILIPAD NA SA JUNE 12

Former Playboy Playmate Anna Nicole Smith joins reality TV trend

LOS ANGELES—First Ozzy. Now Anna Nicole Smith.

The former stripper who married a millionaire and posed nude for Playboy magazine is about to get her own reality TV show.

The daily life of Smith, 33, will be televised on E! Entertainment Television's new "The Anna Nicole Smith Show," network officials said. The show is scheduled to debut in August.

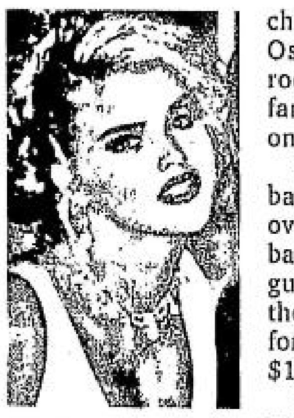
Its creators promise the half-hour program will provide an inside look at the woman who in March was awarded $88 million from the estate of her late husband.

Film crews have already begun shooting at Smith's Los Angeles home, network executives said.

"We've gone with Anna to the dentist, we've gone with her to a Guess? jeans 20th anniversary party, we're going to go with her to get her driver's license," said the cable network's Jeff Shore.

"It's really about Anna's life outside the home."

E! officials said they had the idea of chronicling Smith before "The Osbournes," which follows rocker Ozzy Osbourne and his family, became a hit this season on MTV.



SMITH

Smith has been fighting court battles in California and Texas over the fortune of her late husband, who died at age 90 in August 1995, just 14 months after their wedding. He left behind a fortune estimated at as much as $1.6 billion.

Smith, whose real name is Vickie Lynn Marshall, met oil tycoon J. Howard Marshall in 1991 when she was working as a stripper. The couple married three years later when she was 26 and he was 89. **AP**

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	CASS & CARY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	RESIDENT EVIL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	DRAGONFLY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	MURDER BY NUMBERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	STAR WARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	WALK TO REMEMBER
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	BIBINGKA/LOVE ME TENDER
ODEON	MURDER BY NUMBERS
ODEON-2	JIHAD WARRIORS
ROBEN	SELDA
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	WE WERE SOLDIER / E.T.
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
REMAR	SELDA
REMAR-2	PAGSALUHAN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
B	CASS & CARY
C	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	MURDER BY NUMBERS
CINEMA-2	FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	CASS & CARY
CINEMA-2	WALANG IBA KUNDI IKAW
CINEMA-3	SELDA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PANIC ROOM
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	JIHAD WARRIOR
CINEMA-6	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
CINEMA-7	AKALA MO
CINEMA-8	SPIDER-MAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RESIDENT EVIL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WALK TO REMEMBER
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-12	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
CINEMA-14	MURDER BY NUMBER
CINEMA-15	DRAGONFLY
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	PANIC ROOM
CINEMA-2	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS
CINEMA-3	MURDER BY NUMBERS
CINEMA-4	DRAGONFLY
CINEMA-5	RESIDENT EVIL
CINEMA-6	A WALK TO REMEMBER
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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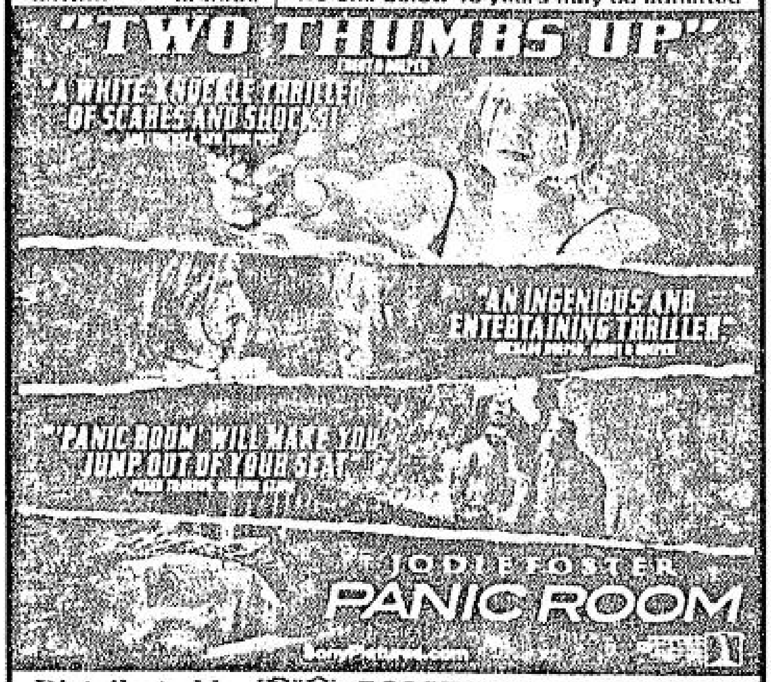
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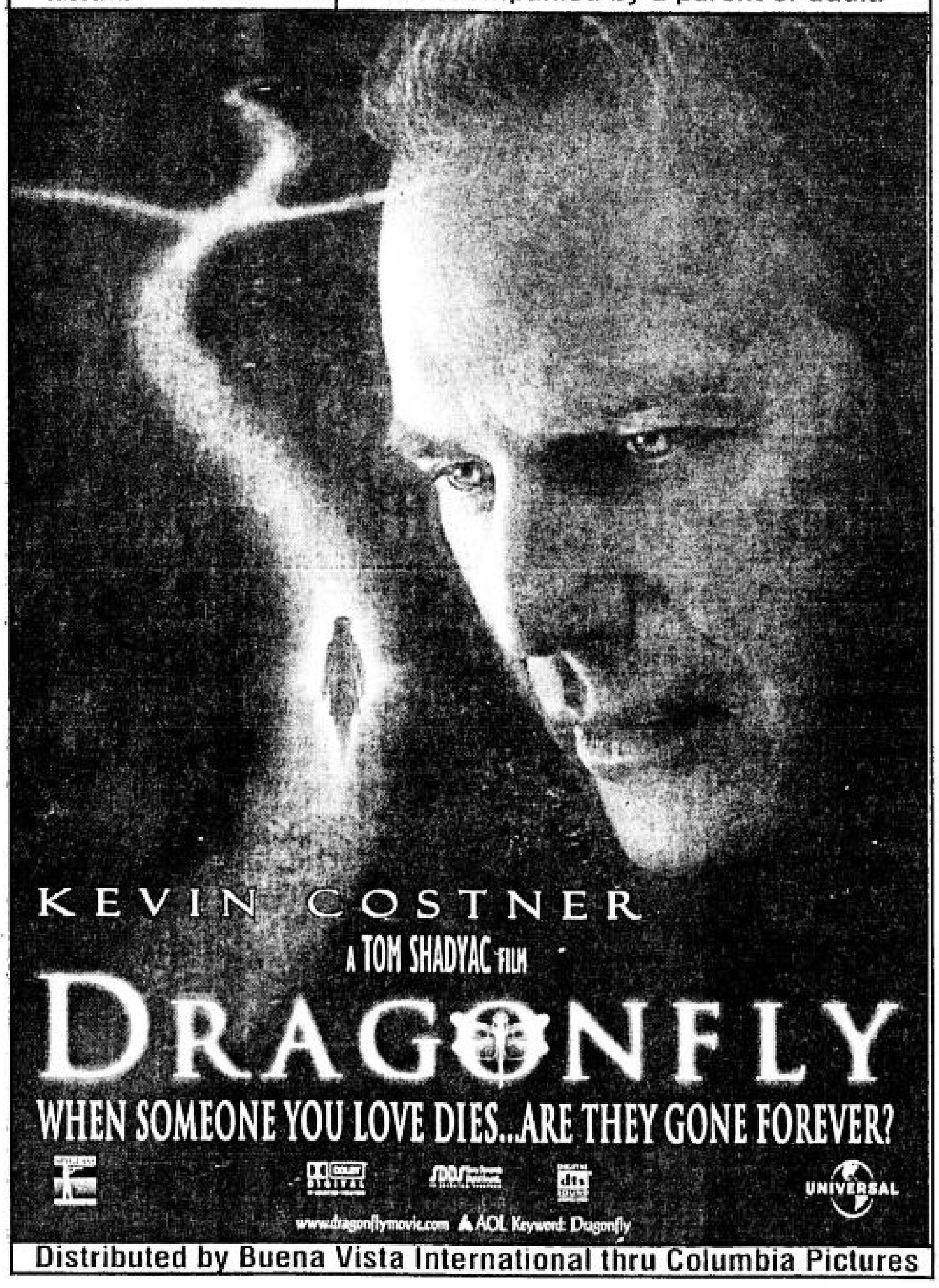
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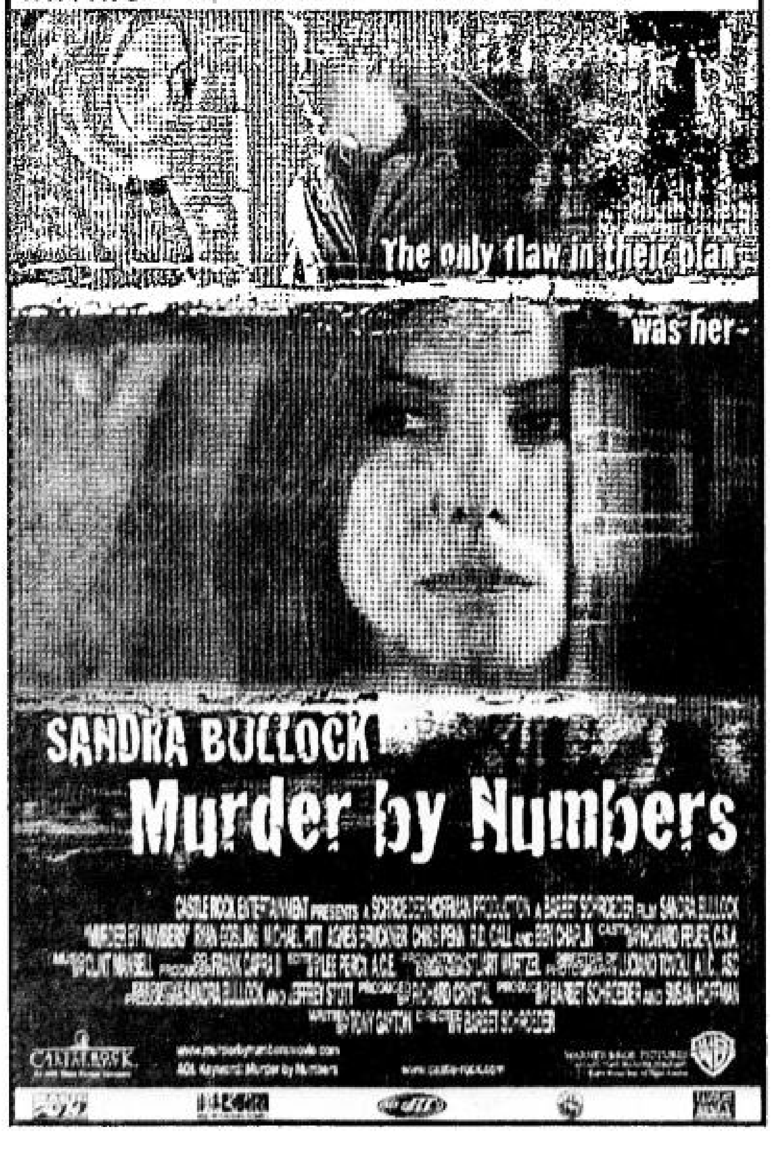

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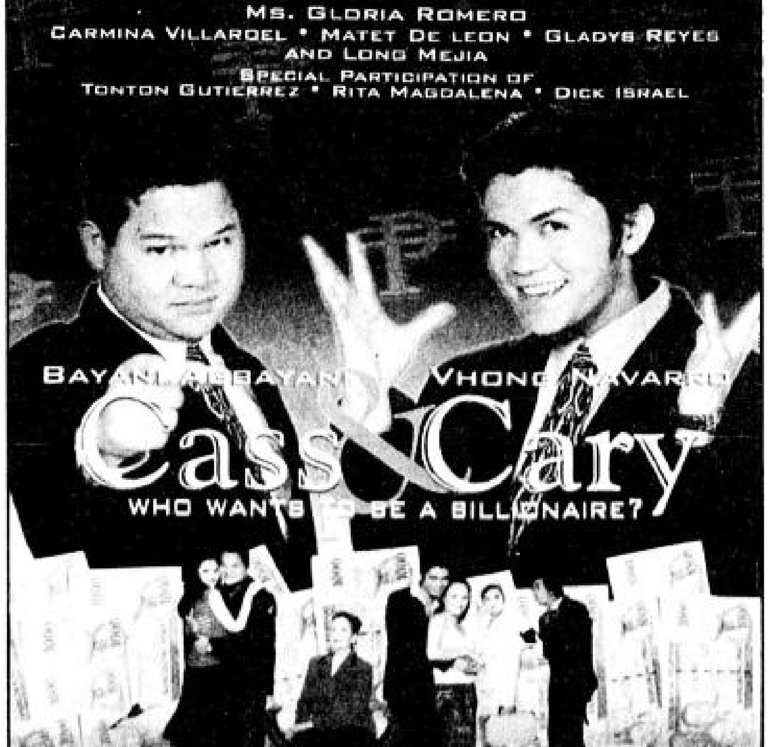

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DRAGONFLY - P13 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	**RESIDENT EVIL - P13** 11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45	**A WALK TO REMEMBER - GP** 12:50, 3:00, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10

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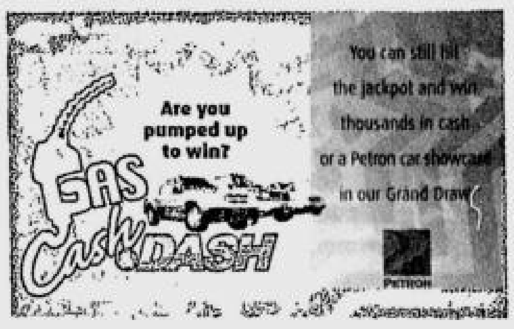
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2002
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** ◉ *Assistant Editor* **Corrie S. Narisma**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Ample food supply keeps May inflation low at 3.6%

Gov't raises export growth target /B3

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S annual inflation rate remained at 3.6 percent for the third consecutive month in May as sufficient food supply owing to robust agricultural production continued to cushion the impact of rising prices of oil, electricity and water.

The National Statistics Office yesterday reported that the inflation rates for the food, beverage and tobacco group as well as clothing slid to 2.3 and 2.7 percent, respectively, from 2.5 percent and 2.8 percent in April even as the inflation rate for fuel, light and water went up to 10.1 percent from 8.1 percent.

The index for services likewise inched up to 5 percent from 4.9 percent while the inflation rate for housing/repairs and miscellaneous items remained at their respective levels of 5.1 percent and 1.9 percent recorded in April.

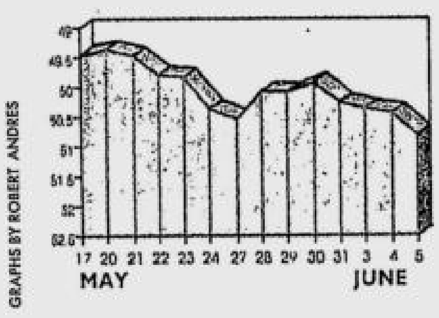
The inflation rate for food alone slowed down to 2.2 percent from 2.3 percent due to slower increases in the prices of dairy, eggs, fish, fruits and vegetables and miscellaneous food while the indices for rice, corn and meat

AMPLE/B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

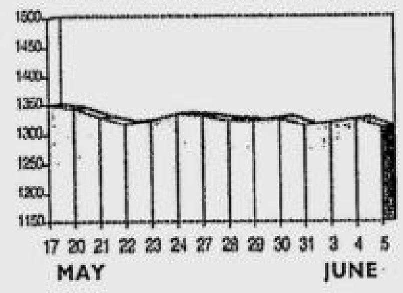
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 50.80 = $1
As of 5 p.m., June 5, 2002

¥ 124.25 = $1
As of 5 p.m., June 5, 2002

GOLD: $325.30/325.80
per ounce Hong Kong, June 5, 2002

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B5)

STOCK MARKET

Shares down 1.2%

SHARE prices closed 1.2 percent weaker yesterday triggered by the delayed passage of key economic bills and concerns over the planned buyout of PLDT, brokers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 15.59 points to 1,311.70.

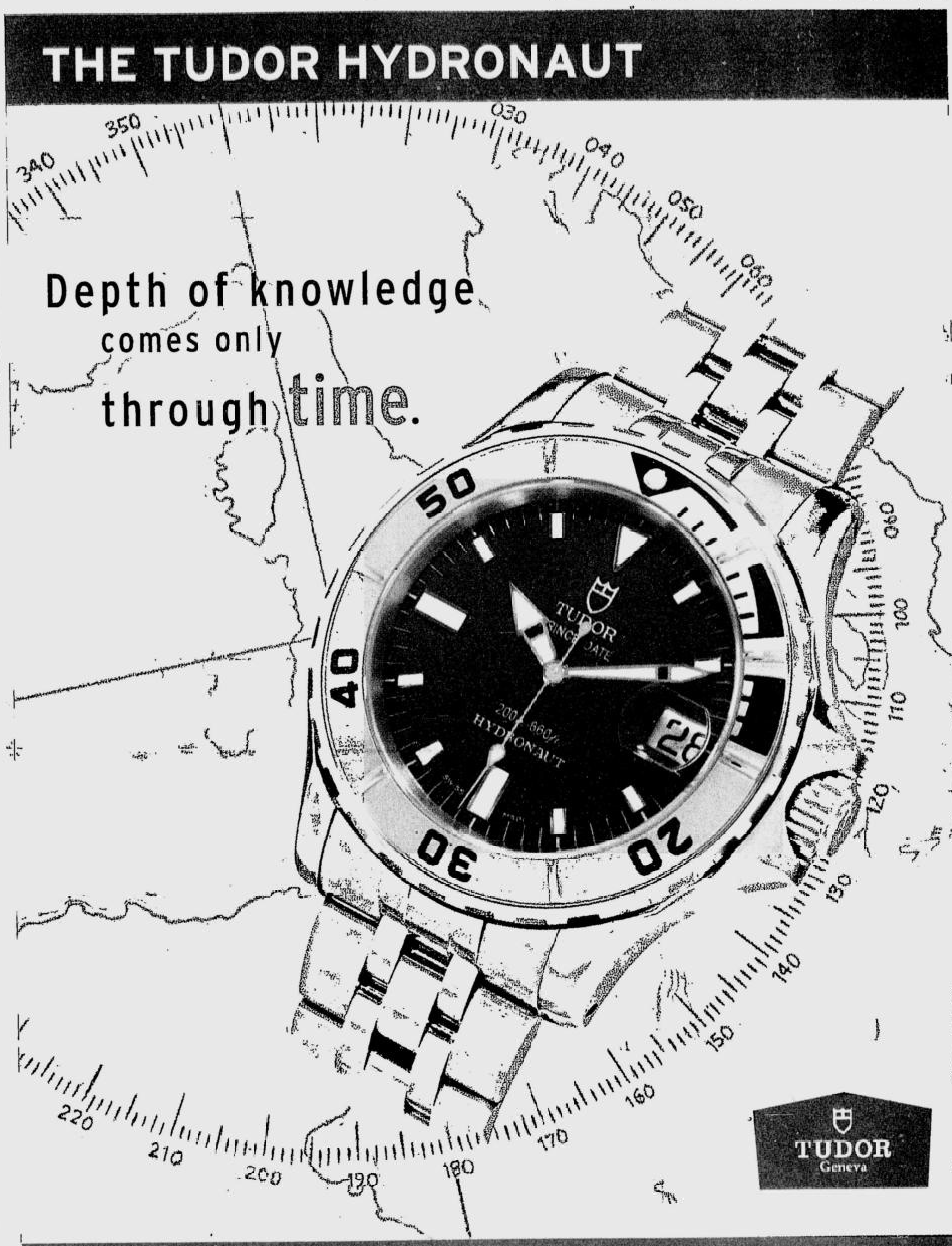
Turnover was 383.49 million shares worth P522.76 million from 368.6 million shares worth P341.7 million on Tuesday.

"The political aspect of the country is showing signs of instability," said Mark Alan Canizares of Citiseconline.com.

A pro-administration senator defected to the opposition on Monday, forcing a shakeup in the leadership of key committees in the Senate. The power struggle also forced the suspension of sessions at the House of Representatives, with government admitting the crisis would affect passage of bills backed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Analysts meanwhile said certain blue chips also began to feel the effects of potential competition from the conglomerate controlled by taipan John Gokongwei.

The Gokongwei group earlier announced it has signed an agreement with Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd. to form a corporate vehicle to acquire 24.47-percent interest in PLDT and a 50.4-percent stake in property interest Bonifacio Land Corp. *AFP*



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-Level 2, Mega B, SM Megamall
-Level 2, Expansion Mall,
Alabang Town Center
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RUSTAN'S SILVER VAULT
-Rustan's Makati, Ayala Center

TIME TREND CENTER
-Upper G/F, Mega B,
SM Megamall
-Ground Level, SM City, Manila

WASHINGTON JEWELRY EMPORIUM
-Level 3, Mega B, SM Megamall
-Lower G/F, SM City, Manila
-G/F, SM City, North Edsa, Q.C.
-North Mall, Alabang Town Center
-G/F, Ali Mall
-G/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
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FIVE DECADES OF RURAL BANKING: A COVENANT WITH THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

1952-2002

MESSAGES

Office of the President
Malacañan Palace

Warmest greetings to the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines on the occasion of the Golden Year of Rural Banking.

I congratulate you for making rural banking a potent instrument for economic recovery and growth. Rural banking plays a vital role in promoting rural credit, livelihood creation, savings mobilization and countryside development. May you always help our people win the opportunities for progress and development.

I enjoin all of you to intensify your efforts in working for the improvement of our country. Help our government win the war against poverty and achieve our vision of a more peaceful and prosperous life for our people.

MABUHAY!

GMArroyo

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

I extend my warmest greetings to the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines on the occasion of their 50th anniversary of rural banking in the country.

Through five decades of diligent service to their constituents in the countryside, they have nurtured the growth and development of rural communities as catalysts of progress. As financial intermediaries, the rural bankers have supported the propagation of entrepreneurial zeal among small and medium-scale industries which bolstered the local economies. The rural bankers have become the conduits of opportunity and prosperity in rural areas through their wide geographic network across the country.

Throughout the years, the government has been an active partner in ensuring the sustainability of these economic goals. Together with the rural bankers, the Macapagal-Arroyo administration continues to provide an enabling financial environment to ensure the development of the rural banking system through prudent policy-making and rational regulation.

I share in the pride and elation of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines in marking this milestone event. Rest assured that we in government shall continue to support the growth of the rural banking system and be your partner in the development of rural economies.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

JOSE ISIDRO N. CAMACHO
Secretary, Department of Finance

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

It is my pleasure to greet the rural banking industry on its 50th anniversary.

Half a century in grassroots financing certainly deserves commendation. Providing credit and other banking services to farmers, fishermen and rural businessmen to upgrade the quality of life in the countryside, while a noble undertaking, is admittedly fraught with inherent risks. But a handful of individuals in the fifties took the risk and threw their lot with the rural folks, which then comprised 85 percent of the population. Because they did, the Philippine financial system is now richer with a P65 billion countryside-based sector serving millions of depositors and borrowers not otherwise reached by the bigger largely urban-centered commercial banks and thrift banks. Today, opportunities have broadened and institutions that can transform themselves into stronger entities with the resiliency to grow and expand have better chances of flourishing even in a more competitive milieu.

I therefore salute these men and women whose idealism and pioneering spirit led to the establishment of the first rural banks in the country. I commend, too, those who followed their route to ensure that the people in the rural areas continue to have access to loans and other banking services. And I congratulate all who are still active in the industry today for persevering against the odds and surviving to take on even greater challenges through the changing seasons of our developing economy.

I am pleased to note that the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines continues to be responsive to the needs of the countryside, sustaining efforts to further improve and broaden the services of the sector to include, among others, microfinance. It is my hope that with a dynamic rural banking sector, millions more of our countrymen will be lifted out of poverty.

Again, my congratulations and wishes for greater success.

RAFAEL B. BUENAVENTURA
Governor, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

RURAL BANKERS ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

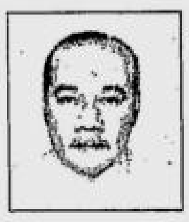
I share in the pride and jubilation of my fellow rural bankers on this auspicious occasion of celebrating the Golden Year of Rural Banking in the Philippines. As originators of its evolution as a vibrant sector of the financial system of the country, we revel in our individual as well as collective contributions that made the rural banking system a salient factor in national development. The tenacity with which rural banks hurdled the daunting challenges over these years demonstrates their resiliency to flourish despite adversities. It is this fortitude that has made the rural banking system an essential engine of growth and development in the countryside.

The expanded role of rural banks as financial intermediaries in rural communities has underscored its vital part in promoting the viability of local economies. As conduits of credit facilities to farmers, fishermen, and small and medium enterprises, the rural banks have provided economic opportunities lending impetus to the improvement of the quality of life in the rural areas. From this standpoint, the rural banking system has always been a potent channel of growth and prosperity for the local communities as well as the entire nation.

The ability of the rural banking system to carry out its task is due largely to the bonds of partnership it has forged with government agencies, the other sectors of the Philippine financial system and, most of all, the synergy that it derives from the rural bankers themselves who, through the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP), have pro-actively advanced the interests of the rural banking system for the benefit of their constituents. It is in this collectivity that their strength lies.

I convey my heartfelt felicitations to all rural bankers as we affirm our commitment for a more fruitful 50 years ahead of us.

NICOLAS J. LIM
President, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines



RURAL BANKERS ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

On the occasion of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Rural Banking in the Philippines, I extend my heartfelt greeting to all the rural bankers through whose dedication and commitment has evolved a robust rural banking system poised for the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

We are fortunate to take cognizance of this landmark in Philippine banking at a time when the focus of the development program of our government is on rural growth and development. Our five decades of existence is a chronicle of the achievements of the rural bankers who, through their diligence and perseverance, have become the catalysts of progress in the rural communities. Through the products and services attuned to the diverse financial needs of the agricultural, fishery, and small business sectors, the rural banks here created an environment favorable for the sustained development of local economies.

We share a new surge of optimism and a sense of re-dedication as we survey the results of our toil through these years and relish the flavor of our gains. We have indeed performed a crucial service to our countrymen and to our nation. But other more ominous challenges lay before us and, as we have demonstrated over the years, the strength of our collective efforts will prevail.

I am honored to have presided over this momentous event and to have the distinct opportunity to view our history unfold before me. And through these festivities that we share, through the eyes of all the rural bankers as well.

And in the memory of my late grandfather, the former Senate President Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez, Sr., I would like to express our profound gratitude for giving us the opportunity to be a part of the rural banking industry through the Rodriguez Rural Bank, the first rural bank in the Philippines.

Mabuhay ang Rural Banking sa Pilipinas!

VICENTE R. MENDOZA
Chairman, 50th Anniversary Organizing Committee &
Director, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines

FEDERATION OF METRO MANILA RURAL BANKS, INC.

The Federation of Metro Manila Rural Banks, Inc. (FOMMRBI) is honored to host the festivities celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Rural Banking in the Philippines. This milestone event caps an illustrious segment of Philippine banking history, one that chronicles the role of rural banks as key players in countryside development. Over a span of five decades, the rural banking system has demonstrated its commitment to enhance the sustainable growth of local economies through financial empowerment. By making available an array of products and services to its banking clientele, the rural banks have stimulated economic activity that redounded to the benefit of the Filipino, his family, his community, and his country.

On its Golden Year, the rural banking system has attained significant fiscal gains but, more importantly, it has posted substantial mileage in social relevance and community involvement. Through the rural banks, it has made available to a broad sector of Philippine society, specially in the rural areas, access to financial services for the betterment of their lives. It has been at the forefront in the advancement of the national development of the country.

The rural banks in Metro Manila have continued to provide financial services for the small depositors and enterprises alike. Our location in the urban areas has given full meaning to the expansive network of rural banks in the country. As we continue to provide economic opportunities to our constituents, we embody the essence of our mission as rural banks.

We, in the FOMMRBI, join our fellow rural bankers in our avowed goal of making the rural banking system as robust as it is responsive to the needs of its constituents. As we reaffirm our commitment for internal growth, we equally emphasize our unity of purpose with the other sectors of the Philippine financial system, the instrumentalities of public governance, private enterprise, and most of all, our valued clients whose welfare we seek to serve.

We stand proud of these achievements as we express our optimism for the future.

SANTIAGO G. SAMBRANO II
President, Federation of Metro Manila Rural Banks, Inc.

It was for the welfare of the farmers, fishermen, and small enterprises in rural communities that rural banking was established through Republic Act No. 720 otherwise known as the "Rural Banks Act of 1952". This landmark legislation forged an enduring partnership between the government and Filipino businessmen to promote the development of the countryside through the provision of banking services, specially credit facilities, in the rural areas.

The evolution of rural banking is a rich tapestry of challenges and opportunities interwoven with the history of our country. Through the dynamic interplay of political events and fluctuating economic trends, the rural banks have remained at the forefront of the effort to stimulate local economies. It has, through the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP), an organization with 786 member-banks, advocated for the sustained strengthening of rural banking both as an integral part of the Philippine financial system and, more importantly, as the catalyst of growth in the countryside. The essence of this mission is embodied in Republic Act No. 7353 also known as the "New Rural Banks Act of 1992".

Through 50 years of diligent and prudent management, the rural banking system has posted impressive gains and its dynamism, reflected by innovativeness in customer-focused and technology-driven products and services, ensures its consistent growth in the new century. It is within this edifice of prosperity that rural communities will flourish, a goal to which the rural bankers have pledged themselves to pursue and a direction that the rural banking system seeks to chart in the next half century and beyond.

GINTONG KABAN AWARDEES

Atty. Jose E. Desiderio, *Acting RBAP President (1959-1961) & RBAP President (1962-1965)*
Posthumous Distinguished Service Awardee
In grateful recognition of his outstanding achievement in successfully steering the passage of R.A. 2229 in August, 1959, which granted a parcel of land in Intramuros, whereon the RBAP building was constructed; for his steadfast and judicious advocacy as President of the Association during which period he obtained many concessions and benefits from the regulators which immensely contributed to the steady growth and development of the rural banking industry.

Hon. Franklin M. Drilon, *Senate President*
Plaque of Appreciation Recipient
In grateful recognition of his outstanding contribution to the growth and development of the rural banking industry through responsive and timely legislative measures; and for his indispensable role as then Executive Secretary in 1993 in the signing of the consolidated Senate and house Bills in to law (R.A. No. 7353) otherwise known as "The New Rural Banks Act of 1992)

Hon. G.S. Licaros, *Governor-Central Bank of the Philippines (1970-1981)*
Posthumous Distinguished Service Awardee
In grateful acknowledgment of his unparalleled support to the growth and development of the rural banking system as CBP Governor from (1970-1981) during which period witnessed the unprecedented increase in the number of rural banks; the launching of the integrated agricultural and small scale industry financing programs participated in by most rural and cooperative banks; the hiring of agriculturists and technicians that provided technical assistance to all rural banks; the intensification of the RB personnel development program by the Institute of Rural Banks; and for his generous financial contribution to the construction of the RBAP building.

Dean Lorenzo F. Miravite, *RBAP President (1969-1970)*
Posthumous Distinguished Awardee
In grateful recognition of his two decades of distinguished and outstanding service as Corporate Secretary, Legal Counsel and President of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines, during which time, he played an indispensable role in the crafting of relevant and timely policy directions that contributed to the steady growth of the rural banking industry; for his exemplary professionalism in printed articles and papers advocating the development of rural finance as well as personal involvement in the crafting of banking laws and policies on agricultural credit; and in written and published text books which served as 'bible" in the organization and proper management of rural banks.

Hon. Alfredo M. Montelibano, *RBAP President (1955-1957)*
Posthumous Distinguished Service Awardee
In grateful recognition of his outstanding achievement and exemplary leadership as the FIRST PRESIDENT of the RBAP during which time, the Association obtained many liberal credit and financial concessions from the Central Bank of the Philippines and the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources which in turn; immensely contributed to the steady growth and development of the rural banking industry during its formative years; and for his invaluable representation that led to the organization of the Rural Banking Institute in the Central Bank of the Philippines which provided free training services to all rural banks personnel.

Hon. Isidoro E. Real, Jr., *1st District, Zamboanga del Sur*
Distinguished Service Awardee
In grateful appreciation of his distinguished service and invaluable contribution to the growth and development of the rural banking industry as the principal author of the counterpart H.B. No. 28736 which granted many tax benefits, the most beneficial of which is the exemption from the GROSS RECEIPT TAX FOR FIVE (5) YEARS TO EXISTING RURAL BANKS from June 9, 1992, and those that may be organized thereafter as finally provided under R.A. No. 7353, popularly known as "The New Rural Banks Act of 1992."

Hon. Alberto G. Romulo, *Senator*
Distinguished Service Awardee
In grateful acknowledgment of his distinguished service and invaluable contribution to the unprecedented growth of the rural banking system as the principal sponsor of R.A. No. 7353 which granted unmatched tax benefits to the system; unlimited opportunity for branching; authority to engage in eight (8) types of allied undertaking; authority to accept government deposits; the exemption of stockholdings in the rural bank from the ownership ceiling for a period of ten (10) years; and the exemption from GROSS RECEIPT TAX for five (5) years of existing rural banks and those to be organized after the approval of the law on June 9, 1992.

Hon. Jose J. Roy, *Former Congressman, 1st District, Tarlac*
Posthumous Distinguished Service Awardee
In grateful recognition of his distinguished service and invaluable contribution to the development and growth of the rural banking industry as the principal sponsor of R.A. No. 720, the passage of which on June 6, 1952 paved the way for the organization of rural banks which provided credit facilities to the small farmers and fishermen in the countryside; and also, as partners in the implementation of the poverty alleviation program of the government.

Rodriguez Rural Bank
Plaque of Recognition Recipient
For being the First Rural Bank to be established in 1952 founded by the late Senate President Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez; and for having withstood the vicissitude of time to become one of the stable rural banks of the new millennium.

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GINTONG HANDOG: AN EXHIBIT, DINNER SHOW & AWARDS NIGHT CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF RURAL BANKING

5:00 pm	**Registration/Photo Exhibit**	
7:00 pm	**Main Program**	
	Welcome Remarks	*Nicolas J. Lim* *President, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines*
	Intro to the Audio Visual Presentation	*Vicente R. Mendoza* *Chairman, 50th Anniversary Organizing Committee;* *Director, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines*
	Audio Visual Presentation	*Rural Banking Through the Years*
	Gintong Kaban Awarding Ceremonies	*Ives Q. Nisce* *Chairman, Rural Bankers Research & Development Foundation, Inc.*
	Introduction of Guest of Honor	*Rafael B. Buenaventura* *Governor, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas*
	Keynote Address	*Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo* *President, Republic of the Philippines*
	DINNER	*String Ensemble*
	Serenade	*Dessa*
	Medley of Songs	*Philippine Madrigal Singers*
	Tapestry of Dances	*Bayanihan Philippine National Folk Dance Company*
	Retro Shindig Set 1	*Spirit of '67*
	Break/Raffle	
	Retro Shindig Set 2	*Spirit of '67*

4% IN 2002

Gov't raises export growth target

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE ENCOURAGING performance of the export sector in the first four months prompted the government to revise its forecast to a growth of 4 percent in receipts to $35.769 billion this year from $34.394 billion in 2001.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday announced the new numbers during an investors' teleconference arranged by Credit Suisse First Boston.

Tetangco told foreign investors that in nominal terms, the central bank had reason to believe that earnings from the export sector would grow by 4 percent. The government earlier expected exports to remain the same as the previous year's.

In April, export earnings rose by 22.4 percent from a 14-month contraction.

"There had been an increased demand, particularly for electronics and semiconductors, among our trade partners," Tetangco explained.

Cora Guidote, the country's investor relations officer, said there was a strong possibility that in real terms, a measure linked to economic growth, exports would chart a higher improvement.

Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas has said that the economic team was looking at a one to 1.5-percent growth in exports this year from a 15.7-percent contraction last year. In 2001, export earnings stood at $41.267 billion.

Guidote said the real export growth numbers of Canlas were based on a flat growth in nominal terms.

Tetangco said that the central bank was firming up the new targets on the external payments to take into account these developments. Currently, the BSP is projecting a deficit of $116 million in the balance-of-payments this year and a surplus of $3.3 billion in current account.

An indicator of investor confidence and the country's ability to settle its obligations, the BOP is influenced by two items. One is the current account that reflects movement in trade, and the other is the capital and financial account that mirrors the flow of investment and borrowings.

A BOP surplus means that there would be more inflow in funds than the outflow as a result of trade, investment and borrowings.

Tetangco also told foreign investors yesterday that the government was expecting imports to grow 6 percent in nominal terms. Last year, the country paid $33.586 billion for its importations.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday reiterated to foreign investors that the government was committed to meeting its growth and fiscal targets this year.

Despite missing by 15.6 percent its deficit target of P52.933 billion during the first quarter, Camacho stressed that the government would cap the fiscal gap this year at P130 billion.

"We will push all fronts to meet the revenue targets and would set out fiscal and non-fiscal measures," he told investors. The deficit is expected to have grown significantly in April when the Bureau of Internal Revenue missed its collection target by more than P10 billion.

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DTI urged to help curb cement imports

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL cement manufacturers are asking the Department of Trade and Industry to strictly implement quality standards and labeling requirements on foreign cement brands.

Union Cement Corp. senior vice president for sales and marketing Francis C. Felizardo said tighter monitoring of foreign cement brands would not only rid the industry of inferior products but also prevent an imminent surge in imports once the provisional duty of P20.60 per bag is lifted on June 26.

Felizardo said the DTI-Bureau of Product Standards' rules were tough enough and that the government need only to implement them more strictly specially to foreign cement brands.

Felizardo said the DTI-BPS has so far focused only on local cement brands in implementing quality standards and labeling requirement. He said UCC had to change 50,000 bags to comply with the DTI-BPS' labeling requirements.

But he noted that most foreign cement brands did not comply with labeling requirements and the DTI-BPS hardly penalized them for this infraction. "What we want is an equal treatment under the law. We think that stricter implementation of DTI-BPS rules should help in slowing down cement imports," Felizardo said.

Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. had successfully obtained a court order stopping the government from discontinuing the provisional duty on cement imports before the June 26 expiry date following a ruling by the Tariff Commission that the surge in cement imports did not harm the local cement industry.

The P20.60 temporary levy has been effective in stemming the influx of cement imports, which shrunk from its peak market share of 35 percent in mid-2001 to barely one percent of the market this year.

But Felizardo said imports were likely to surge anew when the duty lapses next month and Philcemcor was still weighing its options on how to block cement imports from further eroding the local player's sales volume.

Aside from tighter quality standards, Philcemcor is also considering to seek Malacañang's nod for a tariff increase on cement or an extension of the provisional duty. However, Felizardo said the maximum tariff increase that the President could grant was 10 percent or less than half of the 25 percent or P20.60 provisional duty.

Ample food . . .

From page B1

remained stable.

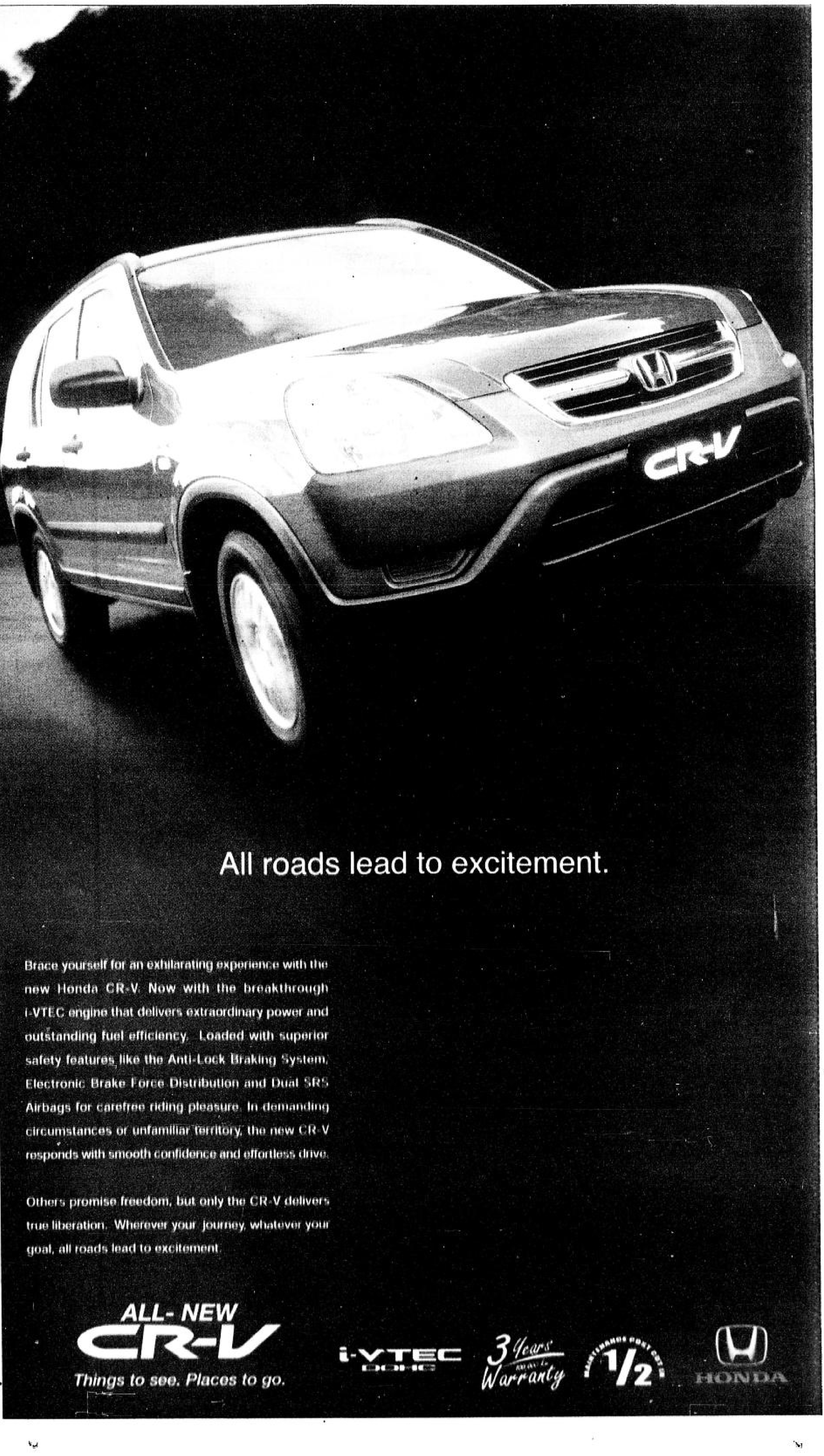
On the other hand, the non-food inflation rose at a faster pace of 5.1 percent from 4.8 percent in April 2002 due to higher inflation for light (13.2 percent) as well as transportation and communication services (1.9 percent).

For the month of May, domestic oil prices went up by an average of P0.39 centavos per liter. Electricity rates likewise increased due to the purchased power adjustment (PPA) to P3.3 per kWh from P2.08 per kWh a year ago.

In the National Capital Region, inflation accelerated to 5.1 percent in May due to the steep increase in prices of fuel, light, and water while in areas outside Metro Manila, year-on-year inflation was slightly lower at 3 percent compared with 3.1 percent in April, as prices of fuel, light and water rose modestly at 1.9 percent.

The May inflation, which brought to 3.6 percent the average for the first five months, further boosted prospects for the interagency Development Budget and Coordination Committee (DBCC) to reduce the 2002 inflation target to 4.5-5.5 percent from 5-6 percent, Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said in a statement.

"This is expected to dampen any upward pressure on treasury bill rates, given subdued inflationary expectations," he said.



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LEGAL NOTICE

The heirs of Nolla D. Paglinawan, deceased executed an extrajudicial settlement entered as Doc. No. 184, Page No. 37, Book 66 Series 2002 Notarial Register Atty. Jose L. Sta. Ana.
PDI-June 6, 13 & 20, 2002

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that the estate of the late ANDREA C. BELTRAN was extrajudicially settled to her only heir ESTRELLA C. BELTRAN -LASAM as per doc# 275 page #56 book# 694 series of 2002 before notary public Jose S. Padolina of Q. C. PDI 6 /6,13,20 2002

NOTICE is given on the loss of a Baguio Country Club Stock Certificate No. 1080 of PEDRO MERCADO JOVEN. If no contest is received a new certificate will be issued.
(PDI-May 30, June 6 & 13. 2002)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO BLESSED MOTHER
(NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen.

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SALES SPECIALIST

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- Male
- Masters in Business Administration graduate
- Willing to undergo one-year training
- Willing to be assigned in Mainland China

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7th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, City of Makati, Metro Manila
Telephone Numbers: 817-4711 • 817-4712 • 817-4713 • 817-5017 • 817-5018 • 817-5014 • 813-1441/46
Fax (632) 815-2662 • 815-2660 • 817-3127
Zip Code 1226

INVITATION TO UNDERTAKE THE PROPOSED CATBALOGAN RECLAMATION PROJECT UNDER A JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENT

The **Public Estates Authority (PEA)** is inviting interested parties to submit proposal to undertake the reclamation and development of about Forty (40) hectares of foreshore and offshore areas along Maqueda Bay, Poblacion, Catbalogan, Samar intended for mixed use development such as commercial, residential, light industrial, among others.

The project shall be undertaken on a joint venture basis with the **PEA** and the **Municipality of Catbalogan** whereby the Proponent/Developer shall advance all costs of reclamation and development and shall be paid in the form of land to be reclaimed.

The **Proponent/Developer** must show proof of its legal, technical, and financial capability and must submit the following as attachments to its Letter of Intent to undertake the project:

1. Manager's/Cashier's Check payable to **PEA** in the amount of P20,000.00 as Filing Fee (Non-refundable);
2. SEC Registration and Company Profile for Principal Proponent and each firm, and member if a consortium;
3. Business Registration/License Papers;
4. Audited Financial Statements for the last three (3) years (balance sheet and income statement) of Principal Proponent;
5. Affidavit of undertaking to provide Financing for the Project in the amount not less than P300.00 million;
6. Credit lines in specific amounts as issued and certified by reputable bank(s).

All qualified **Proponent(s)/Developer(s)** shall be advised to submit a Project Pre-feasibility Study and Financial Proposal which shall be the basis of award by **PEA** of the **Project.**

Deadline of submission of Letter of Intent to undertake the **Project** including required attachments shall be on July 15, 2002 at the Office of Project Development and Evaluation (PDE), 7th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City not later than 5:00 PM.

(Sgd.) **BENJAMIN V. CARIÑO**
General Manager

(PDI – June 1, 6 & 14, 2002)

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY
PNOC
PNOC Building VI, Energy Center
Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila
Tel. Nos.: 555-0293; 840-1440

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID (RE-BID)

The PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY (PNOC) invites accredited Suppliers/Contractors to submit sealed bids for the following requirements:

COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS (CNG) CYLINDERS
(Operating Pressure: 3672 psi / 255 bar - minimum at 15°C)
Project No. : ER200205
Bid Deadline : July 4, 2002

Interested ACCREDITED parties may obtain bid forms upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00 per bid package from the PNOC - Property and Supply Management Division (PSMD) at the G/F of the PNOC Building.

Interested parties who are not yet accredited must first pass the pre-qualification process. Pre-qualification documents-checklist is available at the said address upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00, which must be accomplished and submitted to PSMD on or before **June 21, 2002.** Failure to pre-qualify would render the concerned parties automatically disqualified from this bidding.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security equivalent to 10% of the total bid price but not to exceed ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P100,000.00), secured from any one of PNOC's accredited bonding companies.

The PNOC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive formality therein or to accept such bids or to award any work that are considered most advantageous to the company.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. PEDRO A. AQUINO, JR.**
Senior Vice President
Legal, Administration and Estate
Management Services

(PDI – June 6 & 7, 2002)

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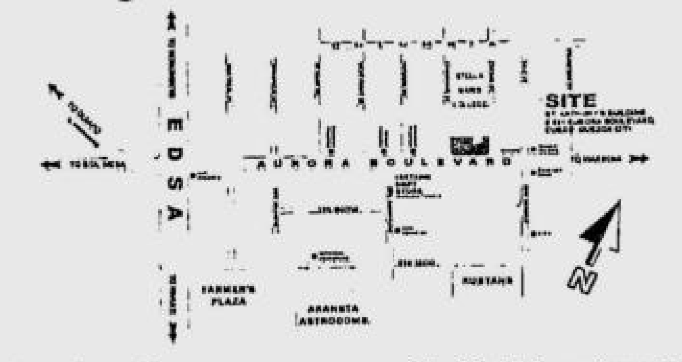

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, June 5, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	20.5	20.75	20.5	20.5	2,039,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57.5	57.5	56.5	57	530,700
China Banking Corp.	625	625	625	625	70
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39	38.5	39	161,600
First E-Bank Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.76	1.78	158,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	39	39	38	38.5	76,200
Philippine National Bank	33	33.5	33	33	28,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12	12	12	12	2,700
Security Bank Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	46,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.25	24.25	23.75	23.75	11,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	20,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	250	250	250	250	30
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	0.88	0.88	140,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1150	1150	1140	1140	1,070
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	28	28	27.5	28	8,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.8	0.81	0.78	0.8	18,340,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	2,600,000
Piltel	0.47	0.47	0.42	0.43	5,310,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	457.5	467.5	445	457.5	373,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.016	14,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	22.5	22.5	22.25	22.25	19,900
Manila Electric Co. B	32.5	32.5	31.5	31.5	1,067,000
Petron Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.7	1.74	2,814,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	62,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	1,306,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.4	1,490,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	11,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	230,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	180,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.32	2.34	2.32	2.32	79,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	23,900
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	33.5	34	33.5	34	158,200
RFM Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	180,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48	47.5	47.5	116,700
San Miguel Corp. B	55	55	53.5	54	391,400
Universal Robina Corp.	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.5	36,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	3,389,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	199,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	410,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	12,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	30,000
ATN Holdings Inc. B	2	2	2	2	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.54	0.56	0.53	0.53	6,930,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	330,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	700,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	69,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	100,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	100,000
Ionics Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	13,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.76	1.76	5,333,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.78	0.79	0.78	0.79	1,950,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.37	0.32	0.35	65,890,000
Music Corp.	0.26	0.28	0.25	0.25	1,720,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. B	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	100,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	25	25	25	25	100
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.07	0.07	400,000
Pryce Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.41	110,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.22	80,000
Philippine Racing Club	5	5	5	5	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	28	28	28	28	111,200
DMCI Holdings Inc.- Pref.	775	775	775	775	10
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	3,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7	7	6.5	6.5	12,976,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.15	300,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	130,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	60,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	1,310,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	1,720,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.7	2.7	4,601,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.96	1.98	1.9	1.92	344,000
SM Development Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	963,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	10,000,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.039	2,800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	3,150,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	400,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	3,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	2,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	4,600,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.004	0.0036	0.0036	169,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	5,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	3,228,570	85,183,880.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	154,020,610	328,592,010.00
PRO	22,414,000	107,729,610.00
Mining	27,040,000	1,092,850.00
OIL	175,000,000	648,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	381,703,180	523,246,350.00
AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	537.67	DOWN 5.39
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,796.98	DOWN 5.04
PRO	569.64	DOWN 27.26
Mining	1,418.24	DOWN 16.33
OIL	1.39	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	759.78	DOWN 4.67
Composite	1,311.70	DOWN 15.59

NO. OF ADVANCES: 13; NO. OF DECLINES: 36; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 43; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 92 NO. OF TRADES: 2,791

CURRENCIES

June 5, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.063830	1.000000	50.4620
Japan	Yen	0.008580	0.008065	0.4070
United Kingdom	Pound	1.552979	1.459800	73.6644
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.136397	0.128213	6.4699
Switzerland	Franc	0.680241	0.639427	32.2668
Canada	Dollar	0.694633	0.652955	32.9494
Singapore	Dollar	0.595316	0.559597	28.2384
Australia	Dollar	0.611397	0.574713	29.0012
Bahrain	Dinar	2.821980	2.652661	133.8586
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.283681	0.266660	13.4562
Brunei	Dollar	0.593986	0.558347	28.1753
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000123	0.000116	0.0059
Thailand	Baht	0.025137	0.023629	1.1924
UAE	Dirham	0.289659	0.272279	13.7397
Korea	Won	0.000883	0.000830	0.0419
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.940000	47.4343
Argentina	Peso	0.294689	0.277008	14.1158
Brazil	Real	0.415072	0.390168	19.6887
Denmark	Kroner	0.134847	0.126756	6.3964
India	Rupee	0.021724	0.020421	1.0305
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.279955	0.263158	13.2795
Mexico	New Peso	0.109307	0.102749	5.1849
New Zealand	Dollar	0.522664	0.491304	24.7922
Norway	Kroner	0.134533	0.126461	6.3815
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017746	0.016681	0.8418
South Africa	Rand	0.110150	0.103541	5.2249
Sweden	Kroner	0.109545	0.102972	5.1962
Syria	Pound	0.024344	0.022883	1.1547
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.031390	0.029507	1.4890
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000976	0.000917	0.0463

Banco de Oro, IFC sign credit pact

By Elena R. Torrijos

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank of retail magnate Henry Sy has set up a co-guarantee facility with International Finance Corp., the World Bank's private investment arm, to lend as much as $50 million to companies upgrading or expanding their business operations.

IFC country manager for the Philippines Sergio Pimenta said that IFC had agreed to guarantee $20 million of the $50-million facility of Banco de Oro, a medium-size commercial bank awash with funds from its initial public offering last month.

Banco de Oro president Nestor Tan said the $50 million was for certain types of loans on which IFC was willing to take up a portion of the risk.

"So it allows us to expand our capability to lend with their help in taking a portion of the risk," Tan pointed out.

Pimenta said that the $20 million was on top of IFC's agreement to extend to Banco de Oro a $20-million convertible loan, which would qualify as tier-2 capital.

Prior to its listing last month on the Philippine Stock Exchange, Banco de Oro signed a non-binding letter of intent with IFC on the $20-million convertible loan. Under the terms of the proposed loan, IFC will have the option beginning the first day of the third year of the loan to convert the loan into new common shares of BDO.

The deal is subject to final documentation and receipt of all necessary corporate and regulatory approvals by appropriate agencies.

NOTICE TO THE CREDITORS OF MANOTOC SECURITIES, INC.

Pursuant to the **SECURITIES & EXCHANGE COMMISSION** En Banc order dated **April 29, 2002**, SEC EB No. 33, the appointed liquidators of MANOTOC SECURITIES, INC., will make its first partial payment of interest. (2% p.a. covering the period April 1980 to November 1997).

1. Those who have previously received payments, please present anew two acceptable ID's as previously filed with us.
2. Those who will claim payment for the first time will receive all previously unclaimed payments provided that:
   - (A) Creditors, if individuals, should present two acceptable identification documents such as driver's license, passport, voters I.D., credit cards, etc., and if corporations, they should present a board resolution authorizing the representative who will also present identification documents as above.
   - (B) IMG creditors should present the original and a photocopy of their INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS and/or CUSTODIAN RECEIPTS. If they have been previously issued checks that had been dishonored these must likewise be presented. If the originals cannot be found, a notarized affidavit of lost of these documents must be submitted.
   - (C) First timers may have to wait for a few days for reprocessing of the previous unclaimed payments.

Creditors will be entertained starting June 10, 2002, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For further clarification, you may call us at the telephone and fax numbers indicated below:

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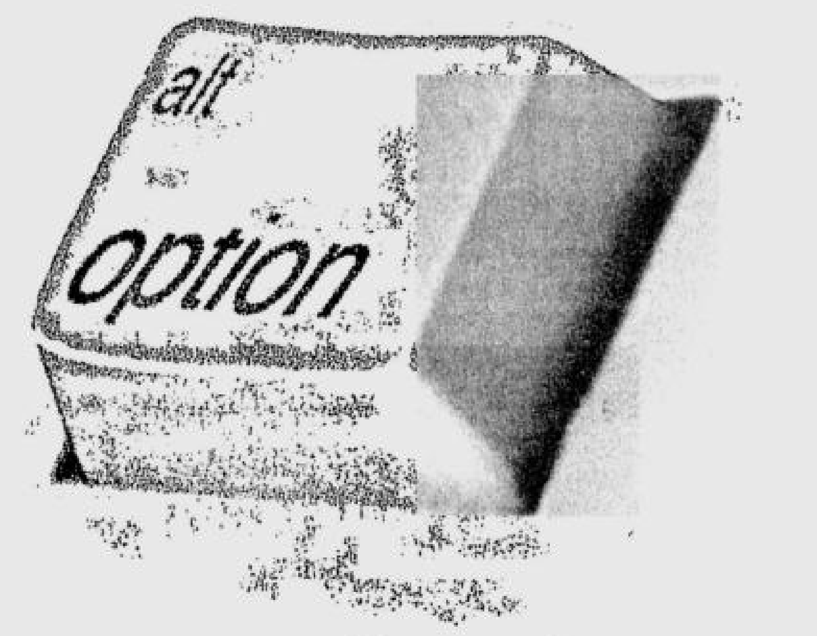

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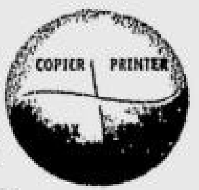

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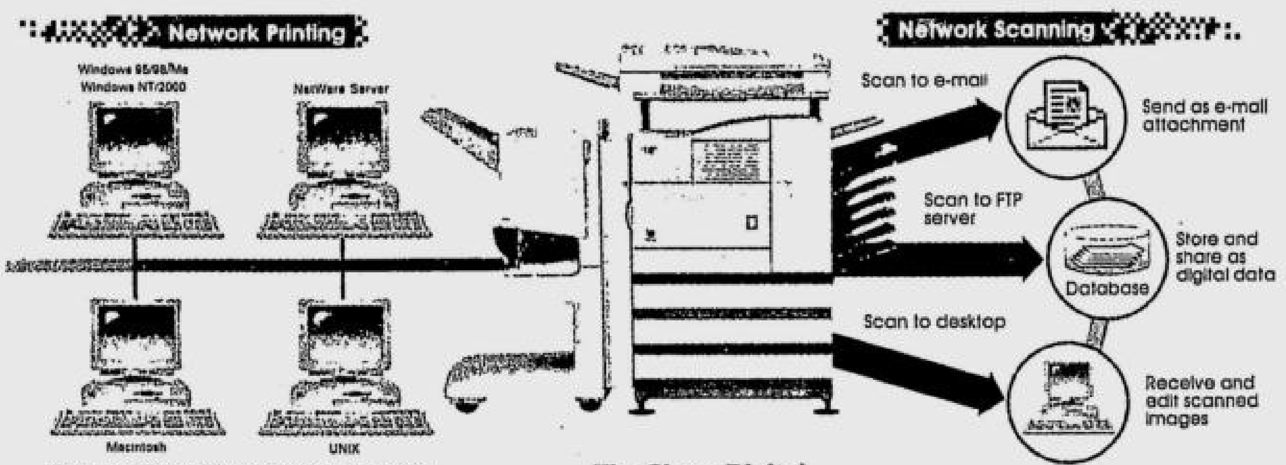

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SHARP CORPORATION OSAKA, JAPAN

Too many petitions on unbundling, ERC says

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission said yesterday it would be unable to decide on about 140 petitions for unbundled rates before its June 26 deadline.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, the ERC is required to rule on these petitions one year after the law takes effect.

ERC Chair Fe Barin said in an interview that she did not know when the commission could decide on all the petitions but said this would definitely be within the year.

"This will depend on how long the hearings would take," Barin said.

She added that with three weeks left until the deadline, the ERC had yet to rule on any of the petitions.

"But we will be ready on June 26 (with the decisions) on some of the unbundling applications for sure," Barin told the Inquirer.

Barin said in an earlier interview that most of the petitions were asking for increases in power rates.

This was due to the requirement that the petitions be based on costs incurred in 2000, while the last time the distributors' rates were determined had been years earlier, she said.

Barin also said the ERC had yet to lift its order preventing the Manila Electric Co. from collecting surcharges on its purchased power adjustment charges.

In an order issued on April 30, the commission barred Meralco from collecting an average monthly charge of 20 to 30 centavos per kilowatt-hour.

Meralco officials said they intended to recover P12.3 billion, which had gone down to P10.9 billion as of end-March.

Asked until when the order would take effect, Barin said "until such time that (the ERC and Meralco) clear up things."

Meralco has submitted a written explanation about the deferred PPA, which the ERC is evaluating.

Meralco vice president Ivanna de la Peña, meanwhile, said in a separate interview there would be no collection of deferred PPA this month in line with the ERC order.

But Barin said the order to stop the collection was effective since it was issued.

Meralco president Jesus Francisco said last week that Meralco was still collecting the surcharges since the ERC had yet to issue a final ruling.

Francisco explained that the deferred PPA was incurred from costs on supply from Meralco's affiliate independent power producers—Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. and First Gas Power Corp.

Meralco has been under intense public criticisms on account of its steep rates being blamed on its PPA charges.

TNT Philippines posts 12% growth

TNT Express Worldwide (Philippines) Inc. said yesterday it posted a 12-percent growth in revenues in the first quarter of the year despite a 30-percent decline in its biggest market, the electronics sector.

In an interview, TNT Philippines country general manager Jose Luis Romero-Salas said the company could still meet its 29-percent growth target for this fiscal year, as the electronics sector was seen making a turnaround by the second half of the year.

He said TNT Philippines was not totally reliant on bulk shipments of electronic components, as these accounted for only 30 percent of its overall business.

Around 50 to 60 percent of TNT Philippines' revenues came from its document and parcel delivery services, he said.

"Our biggest market is electronics, but we also get a lot of document and parcel delivery business from banks like the Asian Development Bank and HSBC (Corp.)," he said.

Abigail L. Ho

Numbers gum

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

OUR exports just posted an amazing growth. It's such good news that, certainly, everybody could not wait to hear about the political disturbance in the Senate.

The trouble in our policy-making body got, er, complemented by the House of Representatives even with its own first-class show of immaturity.

To call what goes on today in our Congress a "circus," to me, is an insult to professional jugglers and even amateur clowns!

Call it what you will, but what's happening in the Senate is just like lotto or "jueteng" or "loteng." It is, in fact, just a numbers game.

* * *

WHICH group has the most votes wins. It is called the rule of the majority. Unfortunately, in our Senate, it's a volatile majority. It's 50 percent plus one—literally.

Who is the majority can change every day, depending on what Sen. Noli de Castro wears, for example, suit or barong or a long face because of all these problems.

For the sake of the people, as a duty to God and country, the senators have to establish a clear majority in the Senate somehow.

Thus, some senators must make the ultimate sacrifice. And that is, they must switch sides immediately to where the money is.

* * *

YESTERDAY, perhaps to cool off from all these politics, Gloriaetta trekked to the crater of Mt. Pinatubo, the world-famous . . . well, "ash-hole."

That's a direct quote from Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon. He escorted (i.e., egged) Gloriaetta for the trek, which Dick is selling as an ecology tour.

It won an award last year for best in ecology tour. Dick has no better way to promote it other than Gloriaetta's tiring herself for three hours.

For what used to be an ash-hole up there in Pinatubo, nevertheless, is today a stunning lake of emerald water. Dick says you can take a dip. Nude, Dick?

* * *

BET on it, though, the usual critics of Gloriaetta will say that her Pinatubo trekking is another pre-election campaign trip. In short, it's all politics. Fine!

Gloriaetta is playing politics, while all the rest of our millions of public officials, including senators and congressmen, can just work hard for the country. Is that it?

If her tourism promo tour is any indication of her resolve, nevertheless, I say everybody else who has any ambition to beat her in 2004 should watch out.

Me, even if my gum bleeds, I will not walk up and down a mountain for six hours to get any number of votes. And how many voters live in that ash-hole, anyway?

* * *

IN case you didn't notice, a newspaper paid ad blamed our problem over the PPA on Gloriaetta and Tita Cory, plus of course Meralco. Hmm.

Behind the ad was a group called the Kilusang Kontra sa Kalabisan ng PPA, or the KKK-PPA. I don't know if Andres Bonifacio is squirming in his grave, wherever it is.

Mysteriously left out in the blame list was Kuya Eddie, during whose watch, officially, most of the IPPs came about. It also forgot about our beloved Napocor.

The ad forgot about the government firm that, as a monopoly, was responsible for power, and that man who got emergency powers from Congress to be on top of it. Swell!

* * *

BUT nobody in business is the least bit surprised. Behind the KKK-PPA is the familiar name of Linda Montayre. Everybody knows whose attack dog she is, anyway.

The big surprise comes in the absence of Napocor. This is the company that we want to abolish precisely because it messed up our lives. If the ad tries to imply that Napocor is clean, who should we think paid for the ad?

The ad blamed Tita Cory for the PPA because, during her watch, the government mothballed the Bataan nuclear power plant. Tita Cory caused the shortage in power.

The PPA is about a glut. There's too much power. We even pay for power we don't use and the IPPs don't produce. Somebody please tell me how Tita Cory could cause the glut when she caused the shortage? Beats me!

* * *

HERE are some facts and figures about Digitel, the telecommunications firm of JG Summit, and PLDT, a competitor that it is reportedly trying to acquire.

The total liabilities of Digitel, as of last count, were some P25 billion. A merger between PLDT and Digitel will mean that PLDT must assume those debts.

I don't know how Digitel stockholders will take it, but I'm quite sure the PLDT stockholders will not like it very much.

In a single stroke of the pen, in such a possible merger, all the gains of PLDT in its debt management program will be wiped out. Bad for PLDT, but good for Digitel!

* * *

BUT on the other hand, if after the JG Summit acquisition of PLDT, it then forces PLDT to absorb (i.e. buy) Digitel, stockholders of PLDT have no choice but to cry.

Word had it, when PLDT and JG Summit were talking about a possible acquisition of Digitel by PLDT, that JG Summit set a tag price of only P15 billion.

That's the payment for Digitel, in other words, which JG Summit can expect PLDT to make if and when JG Summit takes control of PLDT.

And we are not even talking about the Singapore connection here. As you know, Globe also has it. Before you know it, Singapore controls our telecommunications sector.

UOB shareholders seek to turn tables on partners

THE FILIPINO shareholders of United Overseas Bank Philippines said yesterday they would seek the ouster of their Singaporean partners on charges of "gross mismanagement" and "unsound banking practices."

In a news conference, four directors of UOB Philippines said they were not undermining the bank's viability when they aired their grievances in public, contrary to claims made by the bank's Singaporean owners.

UOB Philippines has asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to disqualify four of its directors for acting against the bank's interest.

In a letter to the central bank, UOB Philippines president Chua Teng Hui said these directors—Alfonso Reyno, Victor Lazatin, Avelino Sebastian Jr. and Ferdinand Domingo—are "trying to sabotage the bank by agitating and causing panic among its depositors."

Chua said apart from the fact that these directors' statements in a news conference were "completely false and misleading, the fabricated statements made were calculated to trigger a run in the bank to the damage and prejudice of its depositors."

Sebastian, one of the Filipino directors, denied having said that the bank was losing P60 million daily.

UOB Philippines earlier issued a statement saying its Singaporean investors came in as a "white knight" to rehabilitate Westmont Bank and correct what regulators determined were "unsafe and unsound banking practices" committed by the bank's previous owners.

Brokers' exclusion from proposed corporate law sought

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is seeking to exclude brokers and other securities market participants from inclusion in the proposed Corporate Recovery Act.

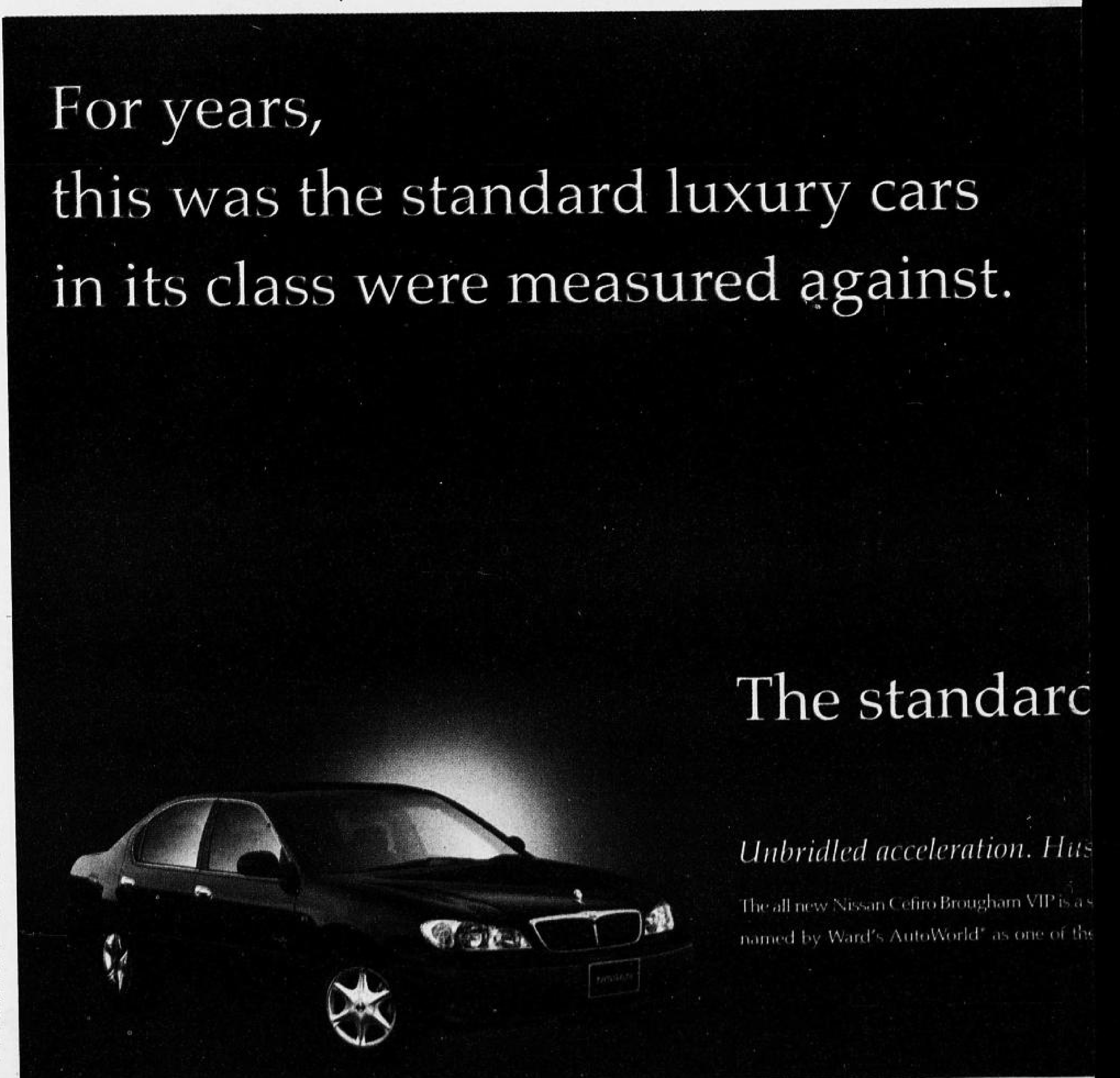
In a speech, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said the inclusion of securities brokers in corporate recovery proceedings would expose the capital markets to possible breakdowns.

Delays and failures in the immediate settlement of securities transactions arising from rehabilitation proceedings "could create systemic risks and trigger a devastating domino effect whereby counter-parties would likewise default on its own obligations and deplete guarantee funds and consequently lead to the collapse of the market," Bautista said.

Moreover, the availability of rehabilitation as a remedy for brokers in financial distress may discourage foreign investors from entering the Philippine capital market, she added.

Bautista said the SEC was also pushing for "time-bound" rehabilitation or corporate recovery proceedings under the proposed bill.

Elena R. Torrijos


For years,
this was the standard luxury cars
in its class were measured against.
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Unbridled acceleration. Hus
The all new Nissan Cefiro Brougham VIP is a s
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Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. reserves the right to alter specifications on actual model without prior notice.

IMF sees recovery of global economy

WASHINGTON—The head of the International Monetary Fund said on Tuesday that the global economic recovery was firmly underway, but that stock markets would remain volatile in the coming weeks and months.

In an interview, IMF managing director Horst Koehler said it would be premature to assume that the recent decline of the US dollar would continue, saying that economic growth prospects in the United States were better than those in Europe.

"We think that the recovery is underway, it is particularly underway in the US and it will gain strength in the second half of this year," Koehler said, noting that there remain "question marks about the strength and durability of this recovery."

Koehler declined to say whether the IMF had changed its forecast for global growth of 2.8 percent for this year and 4.0 percent next year. He said, however, "If there is a tendency toward reviewing our forecasts then there would be more of a tendency to review it upwards."

While the global economic outlook has improved, Koehler said political uncertainties, notably heightened tensions in the Middle East and the possibility of war between India and Pakistan, have "intensified."

With US stocks falling heavily—the Dow Jones Industrial Average is down almost 7 percent in the past 13 weeks and the technology-laden Nasdaq index off almost 13 percent—Koehler said investors should expect choppy times ahead.

"We have to look for some time in the coming weeks and months for volatility in stock markets but we should not be too concerned that this is a kind of steady downward spiral," the IMF chief said.

He said that despite mixed news on corporate earnings, there remained reason for "strong . . . optimism" about US prospects, based on lasting gains in productivity and future gains from technological advances.

And while the US dollar hit nearly 16-month lows against the euro on Tuesday on mounting tensions in the Middle East and fears of a war between India and Pakistan, he said it was "absolutely premature already to put the dollar in the corner of a steadily declining currency."

"The dollar weakened, but I don't think that we should assume this is a permanent process continuing, this weakness," he said. "It could also recover in the next weeks, this depends a lot on the growth prospects here, which in my view are still better than the growth prospects for Europe and it also depends on political developments all over the world that we cannot predict."

Koehler suggested that the solution to the US current account deficit was for the United States to boost its savings and for the Europeans and the Japanese do more to promote their growth. "This is because if growth in Europe and Japan is stronger, then the US can get out of this current account deficit via stronger exports."

Koehler said that while he was pleased with the direction of reforms in recession-mired Japan, he would like "faster" reforms in the world's second-richest economy. *Reuters*

SEC urged to scrap rule on rotation of auditors

By Elena R. Torrijos

JOAQUIN Cunanan & Co., a member of international auditing giant PricewaterhouseCoopers, has urged the Securities and Exchange Commission to scrap a provision in the Corporate Governance Code requiring companies to rotate or change their external auditors every five years.

The SEC approved last month the Corporate Governance Code, which requires listed companies or companies with securities registered with the SEC or secondary licenses from the commission to comply with international best practices for corporate governance.

The SEC approved the Corporate Governance Code last month. It requires listed companies or companies with securities registered with the Commission or secondary licenses from the regulatory agency to comply with international best practices of corporate governance.

It specifically provides that: "The external auditor should be rotated every five years of earlier, or the handling partner be changed."

In a position paper submitted to the SEC, Joaquin Cunanan partner Editha Tuason noted that the mandatory rotation would be highly disruptive to the business operations of both the audit firms and their clients, particularly those with international operations.

Tuason said the new rule would also dramatically increase the auditing costs possibly without a corresponding increase in benefits.

The auditor noted that the mandatory rotation would not automatically enhance auditing quality or strengthen investor confidence. It will even curtail the auditing firm's ability to develop in-depth institutional knowledge of a client and its business, which is critical to the early discovery and resolution of problems that may threaten business, she said.

Tuason also argued that the rule arbitrarily prevented shareholders from appointing the auditors they choose.

She said that various safeguards had been put in place by major accounting firms to ensure that auditors retain their objectivity and independence in the course of their examination of a company's financial statement.

GMA certifies procurement reform bill

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has certified as urgent the procurement reform bill that is aimed at eliminating corruption in the bidding of government contracts for infrastructure projects and civil works, and in the purchase of goods and services.

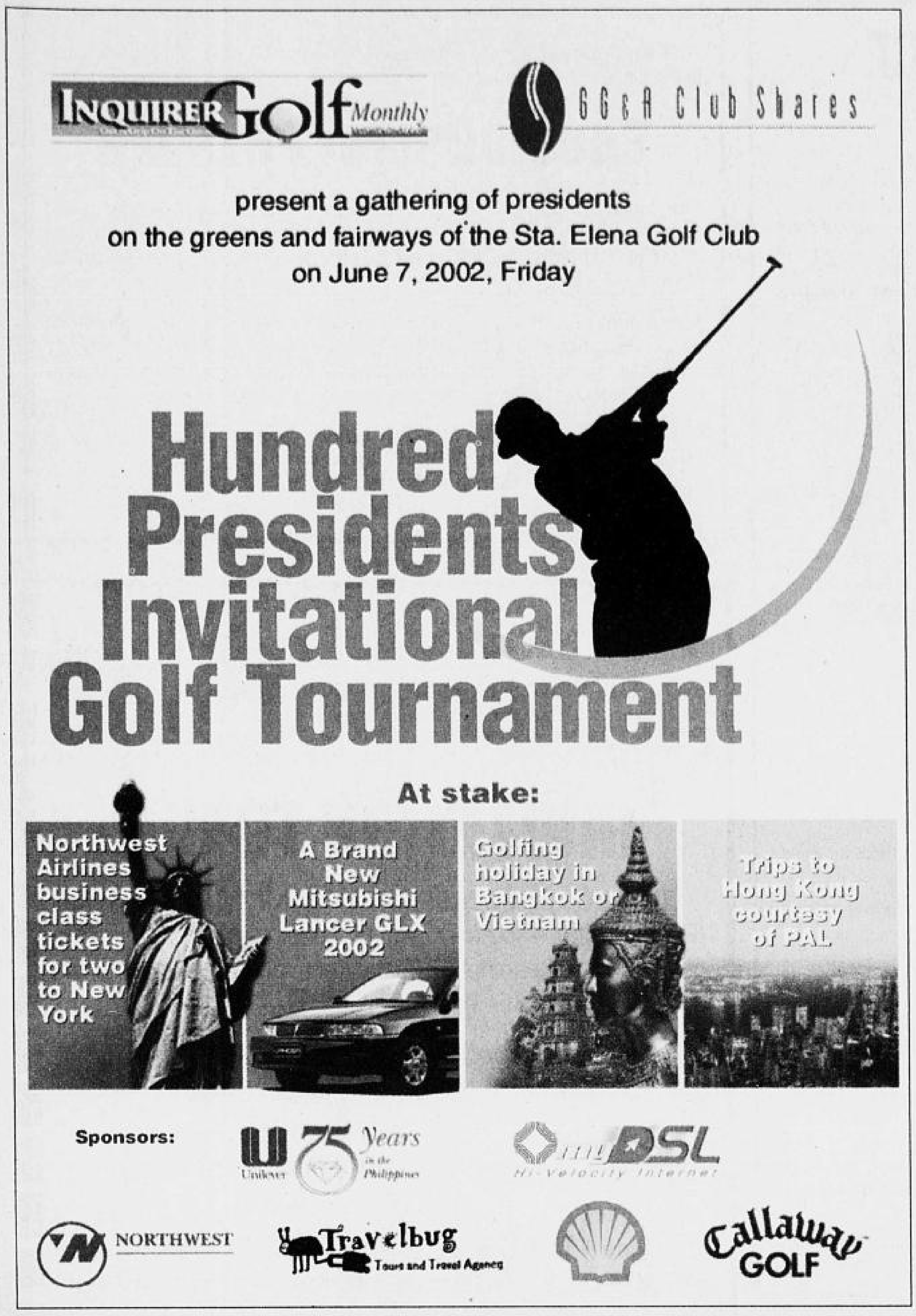
House Bill No. 4809, or "An Act Providing for the Modernization, Standardization and Regulation of the Procurement Activities of the Government and for other Purposes," was endorsed by Malacañang after it was sent to the floor for second reading last week.

President Macapagal said the immediate enactment of the bill was needed "to address the public emergency borne out of the pervasive malady of graft and corruption that has long plagued the government procurement system, impaired public service efficiency, and stunted national capacity for economic growth."

The counterpart bill at the Senate is pending before the Senate committee on constitutional amendments.

The proposed procurement reform measure seeks to overhaul government's system of bidding out infrastructure projects and provide transparency in the acquisition of goods and services.

Under the bill, government will do away with the tedious pre-qualification process when inviting bidders for a government contract. Only a simple eligibility check would be done and only when a winning bidder is chosen that the usual qualification "test" is undertaken to simplify and fast-track the bidding process.



INQUIRER Golf Monthly
GG&A Club Shares
present a gathering of presidents
on the greens and fairways of the Sta. Elena Golf Club
on June 7, 2002, Friday

Hundred Presidents Invitational Golf Tournament

At stake:
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A Brand New Mitsubishi Lancer GLX 2002
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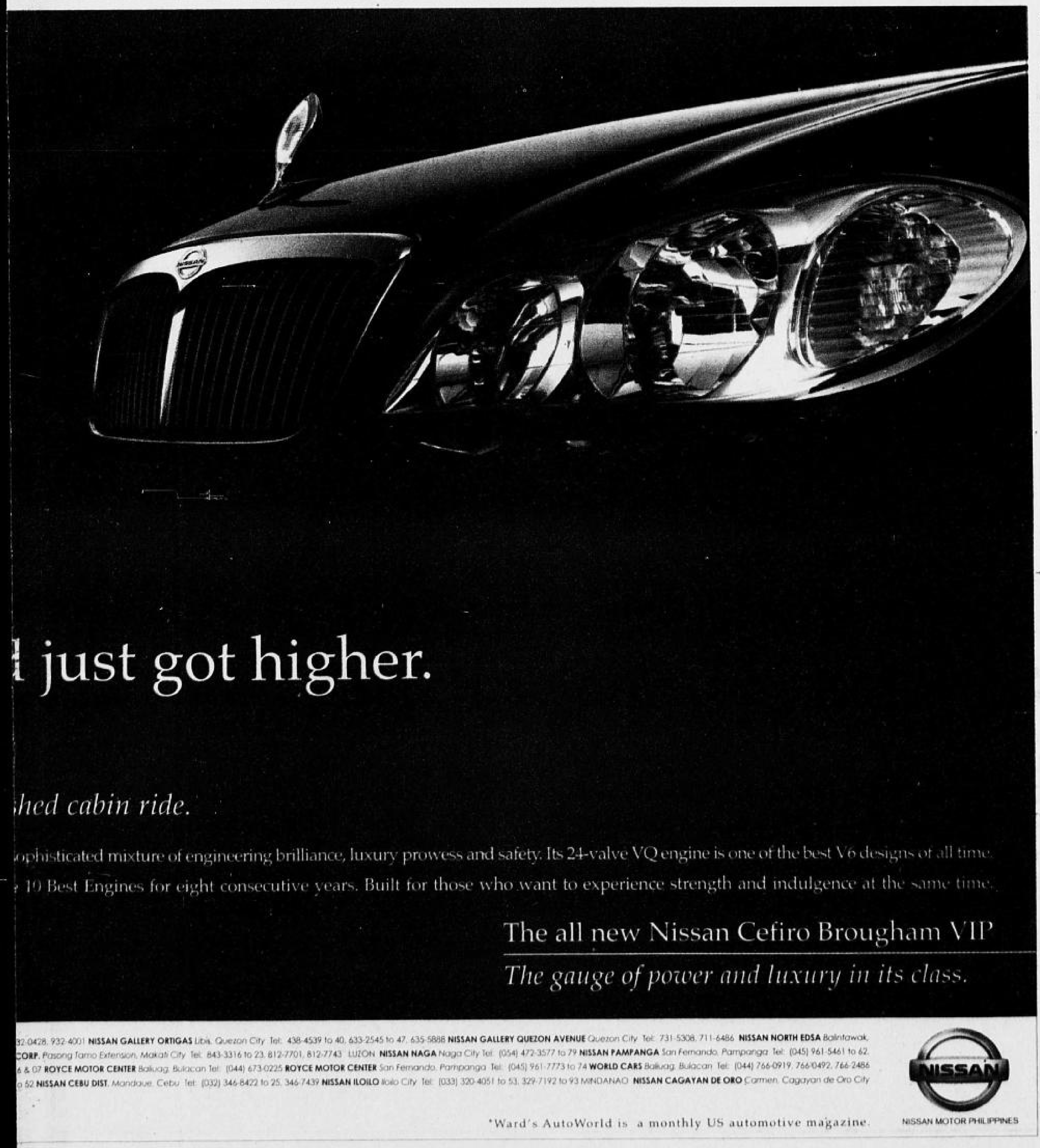

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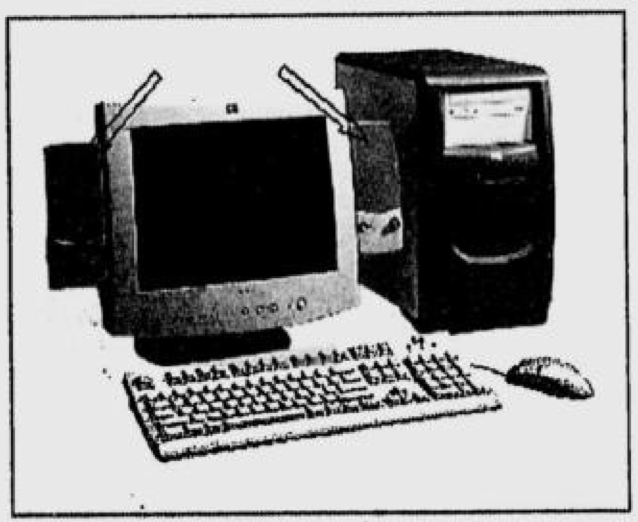
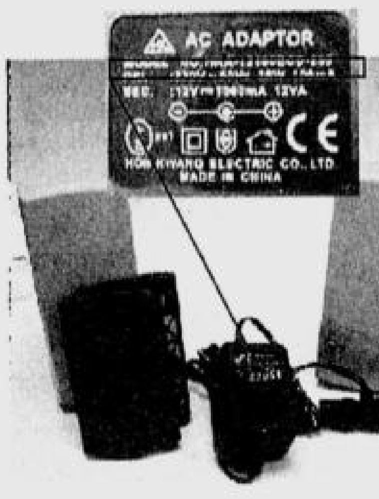
*Ward's AutoWorld is a monthly US automotive magazine.

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE

Recall of Philips Speaker Power Adapters
Model No: HKA-12100ECD-230
sold with Hewlett-Packard Desktop Computers

Philips Electronics in conjunction with Hewlett-Packard (HP) is voluntarily recalling speaker power adapters sold with Hewlett-Packard business desktop computers between October 2000 and April 2002. The speaker power adapter's power cord connector is not grounded, posing a potential shock hazard to consumers. The speaker power adapters were included in **HP's P1534A External Amplified Speaker sets.**





To identify the affected speaker power adapters:-

- There is a label on the bottom of the speakers with the model number **"P1534-60002"**. The package includes a black rectangular power adapter, which is about 7cm high, 5cm wide and 5cm long. The adapter has two permanently attached power cords: one that connects to the speakers and a "T-junction" plug that connects to the computer like the one shown above.
- The speaker power adapter has **"Model No. HKA-12100ECD-230" and "Made in China"** in white writing printed on a black label.

If you have the speaker power adapter described above, you should disconnect the speaker power adapter as follows and immediately stop using the speakers:-

- Switch-off all power to your personal computer system (PC & monitor) including other peripherals that may be linked to your system.
- Unplug the adapter wire plug from the speaker.
- Unplug the main power cable connected to the T-junction plug from the wall power socket and from the T- junction plug.
- Unplug the T-junction plug from the personal computer or monitor power socket.
- Set the power adapter aside for future return to Philips.
- Plug the main power cable in and reboot the computer.

Anyone who has a speaker power adapter as described above should contact **1-800-1-601-2024** toll free Monday to Friday between 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. local time for a free replacement speaker power adapter or visit Philips' website at www.adapterrecall.com and select [**Philippines**] or Hewlett-Packard's website at www.hp.com and select [**Philippines**] for more information.

We apologize for any inconvenience caused and thank you for your co-operation. No other Philips or Hewlett-Packard products are affected by this recall.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT IV
DR. JOSE N. RODRIGUEZ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Tala, Caloocan City

May 27, 2002

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital invites responsible and duly accredited suppliers from DOH/RHO 4 to pre-qualify and bid for the supply of the following items:

A. DRUGS AND MEDICINES
B. MEDICAL SUPPLIES
C. LABORATORY SUPPLIES
D. JANITORIAL SUPPLIES

Pre-Bid Conference: **June 10, 2002**

DRUGS AND MEDICINES : 10:00 AM
MEDICAL SUPPLIES : 11:00 AM
LABORATORY SUPPLIES : 1:30 PM
JANITORIAL SUPPLIES : 2:30 PM

Issuance of Bid Documents:
June 10, 2002 to June 20, 2002 - 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Submission and Opening of Bids:

DRUGS AND MEDICINES : **June 24, 2002 - 10:15 AM**
MEDICAL SUPPLIES : **June 24, 2002 - 1:30 PM**
LABORATORY SUPPLIES : **June 26, 2002 - 10:15 AM**
JANITORIAL SUPPLIES : **June 26, 2002 - 1:30 PM**

Prospective bidders may secure bid proposal forms from the PBAC Secretary, Property and Supply Section, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, after payment of a non-refundable fee of P300.00.

All activities shall be held at the Training Room, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, Tala, Caloocan City, unless announced otherwise.

Bidders who failed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on **June 10, 2002** are not allowed to attend the Bidding on **June 24** and **26, 2002** respectively.

Each bid must be accompanied by a bidder's bond in the form of a certified check, manager's check, or GSIS Bond in the sum of 2.5% of the total bid.

For particulars, interested bidders may contact the PBAC Secretary or call telephone no. **962-9884.**

(Sgd.) **CECILIA S. GARGUENA, M.D.**
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - May 30 & June 6, 2002)

INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Liver or let die

You can live without a stomach, but not without a liver. It does many essential jobs. The blood vessels which collect food from the intestines join a large vein which takes all the blood and food to the liver, which checks the contents. If there is too much sugar, it removes the excess and stores it, either in the liver itself or as fat elsewhere in the body. It also stores vitamins and changes fats and proteins into forms in which they can be used. The liver extracts poisons and sends them to the kidneys for disposal. It makes sure your body gets just the nutrients it needs.

For the Record. What if you had no stomach? You'd have to chew more thoroughly, and digestion could be very slow, but it would not be impossible, for stomach juice contains no absolutely necessary ingredients. Without a stomach, however, you would have to pace your eating to suit your intestine. That would mean continual nibbling, without time for any other business in life but feeding tidbits to the intestines.

Past Forward. This day in 1944: D-Day – five desolate beaches on the Normandy coast of France became the scene of the largest military invasion in world history. Three allied airborne divisions paved the way for over 156,000 troops in nearly 4,000 transport ships and landing craft, under the cover of 8,000 Allied planes overhead. Meanwhile, 800 Allied warships pummeled German defensive positions from the English Channel. Known as Operation Overlord, it was the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany.

WORD WATCH

Overlord (oh vuhr lord) : a lord ranking above other lords, esp. in the feudal system of medieval Europe.

PDI – June 6, 2002

DKT Philippines, Inc., is a non-government and non-profit organization involved in the distribution of contraceptive products is in need of:

Specialist for PREMIER

The job calls for aggressive and highly motivated sales people who can actively undertake initial product placements and implement account plans and specific market strategies in target outlets in the Greater Manila Area.

A prospective candidate must be pro-active, team-player, aggressive and a bachelor's degree holder. Sales experience with a consumer product is preferred. Must know how to drive and possesses a valid driver's license. For interested applicants please apply in person at:

Suite 801, The Linden Suites
No. 37 San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Attn: HR

PNOC
The Energy Company

PNOC SHIPPING & TRANSPORT CORPORATION
S & L Building, 1500 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines
P.O. Box EA 469 Ermita 1000, Manila
Tel. Nos. 525-9271 to 80
Fax No. 525-8376

INVITATION TO BID

The **PNOC SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT CORPORATION (PSTC)** invites shipowners and brokers to submit offers for the purchase of a clean petroleum tanker in good trading condition and having the following particulars:

- **Tank capacity : 26,000 - 32,000**
- **Age : 10 years or below**
- **Class : IACS Member (preferably NKK, ABS, BV, DNV or LRS)**

Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Norberto A. Corpuz at telephone **(632) 525-9282** and Fax No. **(632) 524-8989** & **(632) 525-8376**, or via e-mail address **nacorpuz_pstc@hotmail.com.**

Instructions to Bidders are available for issuance from Ms. Jocelyn G. Atotubo, Management Services Department, Room 718 - 7th Floor, S&L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila.

A pre-bid conference is scheduled on **June 20, 2002** at 2:00 in the afternoon at the PSTC Board Room, at the same address.

Sealed bids should be submitted in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders not later than 2:00 p.m., **July 1, 2002.**

PSTC Tanker Purchase Committee

(PDI - June 6 & 8, 2002)

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PUBLIC APOLOGY

I, **MILAGROS LUGUE GONZALES**, admit that, sometime in February 1992, I took the **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RECORDS** of **Mrs. ROSARIO PADIERNOS** from the office of the record keeper without the knowledge and consent/authority of the concerned parties. That this act of mine could have been detrimental to the promotion of **Mrs. ROSARIO PADIERNOS** during that time at the **RICARDO P. RODRIGUEZ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL** at Bacolor, Pampanga.

I wish to apologize to all concerned, especially to **Mrs. ROSARIO PADIERNOS**, for whatever harm I have caused thru this act.

MILAGROS LUGUE GONZALES

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One last hurrah... and finally, a romp in paradise!

Felix Jose Avellana Suzara

Born on June 5,1946 and back to the arms of the Almighty on June 4, 2002 at the age of 55.

His loving wife **Sonia Rocha**; children **Bolichie, Richard** and **Raffy**: grandson **Kyle**; parents **Florencio**† and **Eloisa**†; brothers and sisters and their spouses; nephews and nieces, relatives, his Freestyle and First Circle family and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains lie in state at the
St. Jerome Church
Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa

"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me shall live; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."
II John 25-26

E. VOLTAIRE GARCIA

Has gone to his eternal rest in the peace of our Lord on June 5, 2002 at the age of 89.

His beloved wife **Leonie** (†)

Children
Henry Voltaire (†) and **Eloy**
Leonor and **Bert Sandoval**
Solon and **Verge**
Eric and **Justicia Mondragon**

Grandchildren
Alex, Ricky and **Raymond Sandoval**
Con-con, Anna, Marisol, and **Noel**
Raph & **Gretchen** and **Tina Mondragon**

Great grandchild **Gaby**

Brothers and sisters, other relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the
Santa Maria della Strada Parish,
Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 8, 2002
at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina
after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the
Santa Maria della Strada Parish.

ANTONIA GUTIERREZ DE LEON

Peacefully joined her Creator at the age of 94 on June 4, 2002.

Her beloved husband **Santiago** (†); children **Ben** (†), **Jorge** (†), **Marietta, Rudi, Norma, Roger, Lyn**; daughter-in-law **Zeny**; grandchildren **Devi, John, Peachy** and **Soc, Cochise, Cokee, Dess** and **Carlo**; great granddaughter **Andie**; relatives and friends mourn her passing and pray for her eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 8, 2002 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Sister FERMINA (ANITA) BELLO, ICM

Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 4, 2002 at the age of 65 in the 40th year of her religious missionary life.

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (ICM Sisters), her family, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated on June 7, 2002 at 9:00 AM at the Queen of Peace Chapel, Quezon City, after which interment will follow at the La Loma Catholic Cemetery.

THE FAMILY OF THE LATE

LIM KIAO
(MRS. YU HONG TY)

Who peacefully joined her Creator on Monday, June 3, 2002 at the age of 92.

Wishes to inform relatives and friends that her body lies in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Her loving husband **Yu Hong Ty** (†); sons **Joseph** (†) and ***Lourdes***, **Roman** and ***Zenaida*** (†), **Manuel** and ***Rufina***, **Vicente** and ***Nely***; daughters **Concepcion** and ***Benito***, **Carmen** and ***Robert***; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends mourn her passing and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on Sunday, June 9, 2002 after the 7:30 a.m. Mass at the La Funeraria Paz and burial will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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ROMULO S. LIM

Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 4, 2002 at the age of 72.

He is survived by his bereaved wife **Luisa**; children **Edgar** and **Sonia**, **Terry** and **Douquez**, **Mayette**, **Lulu**; grandchildren **Raffy** and **Jonathan**.

His remains lie in Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish, Doña Juana Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 8, 2002 at Loyola Crematorium Guadalupe after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." Matthew 10:39

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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The CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION
(Vincentian Fathers & Brothers)
Philippine Province

requests your prayers for the eternal repose of the soul of our beloved confrere, former Provincial Visitor and Missionary in Japan

REV. FR. BENJAMIN "Ben" A. ORTAZON, C.M.

who died on June 3, 2002 at the age of 71 at St. Vincent de Paul House, Kobe City, Japan.

Mass and other services will be offered
on June 11, 2002, Monday, 3:00 p.m. at
St. Vincent de Paul Church, San Marcelino, Manila.

For more information, contact:

Fr. Maximino Rendon, CM
St. Vincent de Paul Church
Tel. Nos. 524-2011 loc. 500; 525-8217

Fr. Atilano Fajardo, CM
Congregation of the Mission
Tel. Nos. 456-3015; 456-3021; 456-3017

MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

National consumer group chooses best AUV maker

By Tessa R. Salazar

NONPROFIT organization Consumer Union of the Philippines has chosen Isuzu Philippines Corp. as the best Asian utility vehicle (AUV) manufacturer of the year in the glittery ceremony of the CUP's 13th Annual National Consumers Awards (Anca) at the Manila Hotel on May 31.

ISUZU XUV

CUP president Quirino A. Marquinez enumerated the criteria Anca winners must meet: reasonableness of the price, which accounts for 15 percent; safety features, 15 percent; reliability and durability, 15 percent; availability, 10 percent; and honesty of claims, 15 percent. Other special considerations account for 10 percent, and include how the product is beneficial to the consumers, and how popular or how saleable it is.

The look of its AUVs

Marquinez stressed that the sales performance of Isuzu was just one factor among many that added up to make it a winner.

What went well for Isuzu, according to Marquinez, was the look of its AUVs, particularly its latest model XUV and Crosswind, the interviews with the IPC dealers, consumers' feedback and the CUP's networks, the CUP's plant visits, and its commitment to its laborers.

The award marks the first time the Anca included a category on vehicles, specifically on AUVs. Marquinez added that with the popularity as well as affordability of motorcycles among consumers, the CUP is planning to include a motorcycle category in future Anca awards.

More meaningful

A visibly pleased Toru Koyasu, Isuzu Philippines president, told the crowd during his speech that the Anca award is more meaningful than any other award for a company like IPC because the vote came from the consumers.

"We accept it not only as a form of recognition for our efforts, but also as a challenge to keep on doing our best to bring top quality products to the Filipino consumers," he said.

In 1997, the Isuzu Hi-Lander was born. Since then, Isuzu's AUVs, in sales and looks, had continuously improved. Its latest XUV is currently in demand, said Koyasu.

"The first step is somebody must nominate the product, and anybody is entitled to nominate a product or an individual. We try to study the nomination, compare it with the other products and gather information. We also call and research on the competitors. After the report, a series of board meetings and discussions take place," Marquinez said.

The members of the board of directors come from different sectors of society—lawmakers, military, labor sector and religious—while its nationwide membership organizations number about 200.

Awardees, too

Other awardees included: Nissan Car Lease Philippines Inc. for outstanding car rental service and 38 more service awardees.

Meanwhile, apart from Isuzu, there were 23 more product awardees, which include Sanyo Philippines, outstanding manufacturer of refrigerators; Samsung Electronics Philippines, outstanding manufacturer of television sets; and Unilever Philippines, outstanding manufacturer of toothpastes.

There were also 34 individual awardees, including INQUIRER columnist Neal H. Cruz as outstanding journalist.

One of the highlights of the event was the presence of the two Imeldas—former first lady Imelda Marcos and Camarines Sur Vice Gov. Imelda Papin.

Consumers' voice

The CUP said that it enables people to have a voice as consumers. It said that even with the government having a consumer complaints' desk, it cannot be anywhere all the time. The consumer group stressed that the consumers are always entitled to their rights to complain, to enjoy honest, safe products and services, to fair agreements, to information, to choose and to privacy and peace of mind. It said that the Anca motivates industries to give a fair return of the consumers' peso. August marks the start of another search for Anca.

Figuring out the new CR-V

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

GAME *ka na ba?* For P899,000 (manual transmission) or P959,000 (automatic), what is the 2002 Honda CR-V, Philippine edition? 1) An SUV; 2) an AUV; 3) a station wagon; 4) a minivan; 5) all of the above; 6) none of the above.

If game show host Kris Aquino were to ask me, I'd choose Answer No. 5. As this column surmised last May 2nd, the new CR-V is a handsome station wagon that looks like a compact SUV, costs a bit more than an ultra de luxe AUV and is almost as roomy as a compact minivan.

It's no use asking the Honda Cars Philippines people whether the CR-V is the vehicle Honda designed solely to break into the lucrative AUV market. Like US Embassy officials who refuse to confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons in their military bases, your friends at Honda Cars will neither confirm nor deny that the CR-V is an AUV.

But there's no denying that the new CR-V's AUV-like price tag is its main attraction. Why fork over P838,000 for a top-of-the-line AUV with leather seats when for around P60,000 more you can have a Honda quality vehicle of unmistakable SUV lineage and prestige?

In fact, the new CR-V's low (compared to other compact SUVs) price riled Honda's competitors. Some of them complained to the Board of Investments but their gripes may have come too late as the CR-V had already been exempted from the excise tax because of its touted 10-passenger (including driver) seating capacity. Honda got to slash the new CR-V's price even more by shedding the first generation's Real Time 4-wheel drive system. When the government slapped a new tax on 4WD vehicles two years ago, the SRP (suggested retail price) of the previous CR-V reportedly soared to P1.5 million. Without the tax on 4WD and without the excise tax, Honda was able to price the new CR-V below the P1 million benchmark.

Apparently, for tax exemption purposes the new CR-V is an AUV wanna-be. However, it is being marketed as an SUV. And that's what irked Honda's competitors.

They would do well to study how Honda transformed the CR-V from a 5-seater into a 10-seater. Honda increased the CR-V's overall length, width and height by 25 mm, 30 mm and 5 mm, respectively, to enlarge interior space while keeping the same wheelbase, tread and ground clearance.

Inside, the first thing you'll notice is that the foldable center tray with cupholders and center walkthrough have been replaced by a narrow seat between the driver and front seat. In effect, a bench seat accommodates the driver and two front seat passengers. The second row seat, which used to accommodate only three passengers, should now take four. But it will be a tight squeeze, unless all four passengers are as skinny as today's fashion models.

To accommodate three more passengers to reach the mandatory 10, Honda imposed a third row seat on what used to be the cargo space in the back. But this seat is short and positioned so low that two adults can hardly sit comfortably on it, much less three. Perhaps it was meant to seat small children. Fortunately, it can be folded down to increase cargo space or it can be removed entirely.

Despite its ungraceful seating arrangement and larger, wider body, the new CR-V drives as smoothly, as quietly and as pleasurably as before. And perhaps even more dynamically than before because of its new, powerful, high-torque i-VTEC twin cam 16-valve 2.0-liter engine delivering 150 ps/6,500 rpm max horsepower and 19.4 kg/4,000 rpm max torque; convenient AT shift lever and parking brake lever incorporated into the instrument panel; catalytic converter reducing exhaust emissions; toe-control strut front suspension and double wishbone rear suspension ensuring stability and smooth tracking through corners; extensive strengthening of the body and frame for greater torsional and bending rigidity; extensive sound insulation to keep noise and vibration to a minimum.

But it's in the area of safety that the CR-V can be rated a steal at its current AUV wanna-be price. Aside from dual airbags, the CR-V has 4-wheel disc brakes with ABS and electronic brake-force distribution (EBD), seatbelts with pretensioner and an omni-directional impact-absorbing body structure that shields passengers. If there's an AUV out there that can match all these features, tell me.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: I used to have an open mind but my brain kept falling out.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

CAR FUEL ADDITIVES

Casite, a respected brand of car fuel additives in the United States, has all that a car lover needs to boost the car's high-quality performance as well as clean and condition the car. It offers new lines in additives and chemicals for the global automotive market. Casite products include Super Octane Booster; Fuel Injector Cleaner; Carb, Injector and PCV Valves Cleaner; Concentrated Fuel System Cleaner and Gas Treatment. These products are available at Primal Enterprises and at motor shops and hardware stores.

Bikini car wash tomorrow for 'Auto Extreme' fans

AUTO Extreme, the new- generation TV show about cars and motoring, is inviting car owners to a Bikini Car Wash tomorrow at The Fort. The car wash itself is going to be part of a night filled with live band music that kicks off at 8 p.m., in front of the Hot Rod Bar and Café. There will also be a car show mounted by Autoindustriya.com and the event will be sponsored in part by Strongholds Insurance in cooperation with the Baron Group.

All car wash participants get to take home a free souvenir photograph of themselves with the ladies washing their cars, courtesy of Marco Abesamis Photography. Lucky guests will also have a chance to win premium items by Sari-Sari, as well as magazine subscriptions and additional giveaways from FHM.

"Auto Extreme," a weekly TV magazine about everything automotive, airs every Saturday at 4 p.m. on RPN 9. Already, the show has gained quite a following, especially among young car lovers who find the quick pace and VJ-type hosts of the show to be something totally new in local car shows.

Vitamins for engines

THE STRAINS of going to work daily, its demands, the stress, the deadlines and the quality moments for your family are just realities of modern day. Even if we eat regular meals a day (sometimes beyond three), we still can't help but take supplements that will boost our energy level to meet the demands of everyday living.

Today's automobiles are also experiencing the same conditions. With the modern engine designed to be lightweight, efficient and mostly operating at high temperatures, they have to meet the punishing requirements of higher road speeds, traffic, higher engine loads, short trips and extreme temperatures. Fortunately, there is a specific vitamin for your engine—STP (Scientifically- Treated Petroleum).

STP Oil Treatment is the perfect vitamin for your vehicle, as it provides a daily dose of extra protection against today's oppressive driving conditions. With its proper balance of additives, it can complete the job and pump up the engine to provide maximum performance.

STP Oil Treatment is a proprietary oil additive that combines special ingredients to provide extra protection for the engine's specific needs:

- Viscosity Index Improvers which are used in the formulation of lubricants to provide greater resistance to thickening at low temperatures and thinning at high temperatures.
- Anti-wear Agents that serve to protect vital engine parts from wear caused by metal-to- metal contact.
- Anti-oxidants that help prevent thermal oil breakdown.
- Dispersants and Detergents which help keep sludge and other engine deposits from adhering to engine parts.

Basic performing benefits of STP Oil Treatment result from increased oil shearing strength, increased oil "greasiness" and increased oil firm adherence.

STP Oil Treatment is used as an additive in the crankcase of cars, trucks, tractors, boats, mowers and motorcycles. It can also be used in manual transmissions, gearboxes, differentials and power steering. It is also recommended for general shop use in rebuilding engines, to improve bearing seal, prevent rust during storage or shipment and assure immediate lubrication on start on.

Unlike vitamins though, STP doesn't have to be taken daily. Its dosage is simple: you only need to maintain approximately 10 percent in the crankcase; add to warm engine; and add one bottle per oil change. It blends with single and multigrade motor oils and greases.

Toyota launches special edition 'J Series'

TOYOTA recently introduced in the market the J Series special edition models featuring the RAV4, the Hilux 4x4 SR5 and the Hiace Super Grandia.

All three Toyota recreational vehicles have been loaded with extra features worthy of its elite "J" distinction. The J Series edition from Toyota is the latest offering featuring the "J" grade that represents the finest limited features available in Toyota vehicles.

J SERIES special edition models—the Hilux 4x4 SR5, the RAV4 and the Hiace Super Grandia

The RAV4 J edition is immediately recognized with its "J" meshed-type front grille which emanates an extra-sporty appearance emphasizing the RAV4's extreme form and muscular stance. The "J" grille further complements the vehicle's large multireflector lamps and the massive front bumper. The RAV4 J's rear body appearance has also been raised to another level with a sporty rear spoiler that blends with its rear combination lamps while its "J" tire cover decal positions very well with the vehicle's convex-shaped back door garnish.

The rugged Hilux is undoubtedly the toughest in its class with its worldwide reputation for outstanding reliability and rugged proficiency even in the harshest conditions. The new Hilux SR5 J Series model, however, proves that beauty and brute power can coexist, in style. It has body colored overfenders that impress a more powerful physique. Its dynamic body side stripes temper the otherwise brute appeal of its exterior body.

The Hiace Super Grandia J Series is designed to pamper and indulge its passengers with new features that complement its cozy interior ambiance. The Super Grandia J Series comes with a Twin Monitor VCD System that transforms the Hiace into a virtual theater. Embedded in the rear passenger seats, the VCD system provides entertainment to the passengers without causing undue distraction to its driver ensuring driving safety.

The Toyota J Series Edition models are available at special premium prices. The RAV4 automatic transmission is available for P1,360,000 while the manual transmission is priced at P1,325,000. The Hilux 4x4 SR5 is specially priced at P1,093,000 while the Hiace Super Grandia is available for P1,198,000.

Helpful hints on school bus safety

AS part of its public service efforts, Centro Manufacturing Corp., the exclusive body makers of the Isuzu Passenger Van (IPV), shares some tips on school bus safety as the school opening draws closer.

Known for its strict adherence to world-class standards in auto body making, which made it a choice for Isuzu Philippines' line of Asian passenger vehicles (APV), Centro has always stressed on durability, efficiency and safety. Such qualities, by the way, are reflected on the IPV, which, among its varied uses, is widely used as school bus by a growing number of school bus operators.

The following safety tips are easy-to-follow guides:

- Children should be ready at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- When the bus approaches, stand at least three giant steps or six feet away from the street or curb.
- Do not enter the bus until the driver says or signals that it is okay.
- Do not cross the road until the driver gives the go-signal
- Never walk behind the bus or alongside the bus where the bus driver is not able to see you.
- Be attentive to the driver's or bus mother's instructions.
- Do not be unruly inside the bus, especially when it's running.
- Do not extend your arms outside the bus.
- Sit in your designated place.
- Be sure to get the bus driver's attention when walking toward the bus, especially when you are at a place not easily visible to the driver like behind or beside the bus. Better yet, do not mill around but go straight to the bus' entrance.

Reminders to drivers:

- Drivers must be especially alert where children congregate near bus stops.
- Check the condition of the vehicle, especially the brakes.
- It is advisable to have a first-aid kit, just in ease.
- Make sure to have a roster of the children and update it when needed.
- Always coordinate with the bus mother.

Mercedes-Benz enchants RP with new E-Class

By Charles E. Buban

FILIPINOS have always loved a Mercedes-Benz car. For them, it's a status symbol—a sort of badge that signifies success and accomplishment in life. If there is one Mercedes-Benz car that Filipinos can readily identify with, it is perhaps the E-Class.

Indeed, the E-Class has established itself as the German automaker's most successful sedan in the upper mid-range segment, enjoying about 25 percent global market share. For this year, the company is expecting to sell some 200,000 of this particular unit worldwide.

The introduction of the all-new E-Class at the Brussels Auto Show in Belgium in January further beefed up the sales of the series so much so that Mercedes-Benz declared the E-Class an outstanding image promoter.

Some 26,000 have been delivered since its launch in mid-March.

"Mercedes-Benz is just fulfilling the customers' expectation so it gave this series an entirely distinctive design and has equipped the model series with trend-setting innovations," says Danny Lamug, sales manager of Commercial Motors Corp., the exclusive Philippine assembler and distributor of Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

First glimpse

Last month the country's motoring world finally got a glimpse of this new E-Class during a private preview sponsored by CMC. On first glance, the unique light-alloy wheels are immediately apparent. Upon closer inspection, a modified radiator grille and extra chrome trim help to set the car apart from its other cousins. Once inside, you'll notice the burr walnut trim and gearshift lever badge, leather-trimmed steering wheel, "Paris" upholstery, aluminum rings around the instrument dials and chrome strips in the door handles.

The dynamic appearance of the new E-Class accurately reflects the superior driving experience that the car promises to provide. With its sleek lines highlighted by its distinctive new headlamps, the new E-Class will surely slice cleanly and efficiently through the air.

Beyond its elegant contours, the new E-Class is imbued with intelligence. It features Sensotronic Brake Control that, according to CMC, will precisely control the braking pressure at each wheel. This innovative new electronically activated system will offer shorter stopping distances and increased control under braking compared to conventional hydraulic systems. This will be evident during cornering or when driving on loose or uneven surfaces.

Additional benefits of the SBC provide the new E-Class with Soft Stop and Dry Brake. With Soft Stop, the slight jolt that can be felt as a car comes to a halt is diminished while with Dry Brake, the water from the brake discs is removed when the windscreen wipers are activated, ensuring shorter stopping distances.

The new E-Class is available in two variants: the E240 (gasoline) and the E220 CDI (diesel). The E240, priced at P3.9 million, is powered by a V6 2.6 engine. The E220 CDI, on the other hand, is powered by a new generation diesel engine—a four-cylinder in-line unit that features increased cylinder head pressure, improved airflow and an optimized turbocharger. This model, which carries a price tag of P3.5 million, hauls additional power and torque, with reduced fuel consumption and exhaust emissions.

E-Class family tree

It was in 1947 when Mercedes-Benz began the production of the E-Class series. Called the 170 model, it was soon followed by the 180 and 190 models (better known as the "Ponton Mercedes") in 1953.

Eight years later, production began for the "tail fin Mercedes," which uses an internal series designation W 110. This successful model was superseded by the W 114/115 series, also known as the "Strich-Acht" (dash eight) Mercedes in reference to the year in which production began. The "Strich-Acht also gave birth to new body variants in the upper mid-range category: a sedan with a long wheelbase and a sportier coupé version in 1968.

In 1976, the W 123 series that followed yielded yet another variant—the T-model station wagon. The T-model was not only the first station wagon offered by Mercedes-Benz but was also one of the first models in this segment.

The W 124 series came next in September 1991 that contributed yet a fifth body variant to the upper mid-range category—a convertible.

The W 210-series was introduced in June 1995 as the successor to the W 124 series. Characterized by the prominent front end with four elliptical headlights and rear styling similar to that of a coupé, it offered an eye-catching form that became an instant hit among car enthusiasts.

This new design ushered a new era for the E-Class. The four-eyed face of the new E-Class has been unmistakably what strongly characterized the car from the rest and will continue to be the basis of its future versions.

THE NEW and attractive design of the interior as well as the dynamic multicontour seats only smoothen the ride even more

MERCEDES-BENZ E-Class

Sison's letter for all seasons

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THE SPOTLIGHT falls today on Luis F. Sison (any relation to Boni M. Sison, that great and much-admired lawyer, if not Joma Sison?).

Sison, chair and CEO of the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC), has wrote me a letter in reaction to my piece here on May 23 regarding the almost-daily traffic chaos in both the South and North Luzon Expressways. The PNCC, in case you still don't know, operates both expressways. Let's break Sison's letter piece by piece to clarify the issues at hand.

1) "Let me extend my appreciation for calling my attention to your sentiments regarding the '*traffic jams that seem like eternity near the North Expressway's San Fernando Exit.*'"

Thank you, sir. I appreciate your appreciation but any solution to the above-cited problem? People curse it like the devil. The public wants solutions, not appreciation.

2) "I also noted your suggestion to allow vehicles to make use of '*the unpaved left portion of the highway in their bid to wiggle out of the mess.*' Your rationale behind this is '*it's their car anyway, not yours.*' Traffic rules and regulations are made not to inconvenience the motoring public but to ensure a smoother, more orderly traffic and a safer one at that. To reason out that '*it's my car anyway*' completely disregards the rights of other motorists."

You mean if you're in a mess, you avoid not wiggling out of the mess? My, my. Even robots do try to unshackle themselves from a trap. Get this, sir. How can your traffic rule be 'more orderly' when motorists' blood boils over the ineptness of your men if they're seen directing traffic at all in the expressways? You call the sight of vehicles stuck in a traffic jam for hours and hours near the San Fernando Exit 'orderly and a safer one at that'? You gotta be kidding, sir.

3) "To reason out that '*it's my car anyway*' completely disregards the rights of the other motorists. How would you as a motorist feel if, after patiently queuing for your turn, were (sic) suddenly squeezed out by a vehicle from the median dirt road, at the exit points which (sic) are actually designed to accommodate only the number of paved lanes?"

Wrong. I didn't say "it's my car anyway." I said, "it's their car anyway." Time to change the grade of your eyeglasses, sir? With a proper traffic rule, it can be done. Those bold enough to use the unpaved left portion of the road (*it's their car, anyway*) should be allowed by your men manning the exit points (if they are there at all) to exit one at a time so as not to totally rob the other motorists of "their rights." That way, you lessen the length of time of your travel and while you are queuing. Common sense *lang*, sir.

4) "Does it also mean that we should not follow the 'law on seatbelts' because it's 'our life anyway,' or 'the law of compulsory helmets for cyclists' because it's their heads, anyway? For that matter, perhaps, we should also allow pedestrians to cross anywhere since it's their own lives and limbs, as well."

Very, very dangerous suggestion, sir. If you think my suggestion is bad enough as you seem to say so, please don't worsen things by suggesting a more deadly alternative. We are not here to make suicidal maniacs out of our pedestrians/motorists, are we?

5) "In the expressways, it is of paramount importance to maintain order and discipline. As they say, better to wait but to arrive safe and alive. Nevertheless, in cases where traffic is really heavy, we resort to counter flow measure(s) to partially ease the situation."

Hello, but have you been really maintaining order and discipline? If only to cite one common sight of disorderliness committed in both expressways daily, many slow-moving motorists use the fast lane with impunity because your men are rarely seen enforcing the rule. Counter flow? Yes, I agree that it partially eases the situation and, therefore, it is nothing but a band-aid solution. If I may ask, when is the long-term solution coming, sir?

6) "On your Quote Me statement i.e. '*Expressway signs are being disobeyed with impunity because nobody seems to have the political will to enforce them.*' This seems to be a rather unfair observation. PNCC apprehends around 30,000 violators monthly, and it will continue to improve on its enforcement of the traffic laws."

Uh-oh. Cheers to that. But of course you don't apprehend nonviolators, do you? If you don't mind, can I have a copy of the list of the 30,000 violators for the month of April? Including their addresses? Make that duly certified true copy, please.

7) "If we long to achieve a smoother traffic flow not just in the expressways but anywhere else for that matter, let us not resort to so-called 'short-cuts' at the expense of other motorists and with total disregard of traffic laws, but rather let the discipline start with ourselves in ensuring a more orderly and safer (sic) travel for all concerned. It is further my hope that media, which indeed wields a powerful tool in shaping other people's minds, should equally practice great responsibility in selling its ideas to the public. Let us not forget, as in this case, to espouse the right values of discipline and order in place of lawlessness and disarray in the streets."

You are the first person I know who hates "short-cuts." You probably hate text messaging, too. Ah, grow up, sir. Dinosaurs were millenniums ago. There is no lawlessness where there is enforcement of the law, no disarray where there is an enforcer who enforces. Sadly, we hardly see things of that sort in both expressways, sir.

8) Oh, I almost forgot. Sison also said: "I do not understand the headaches and the stress that traffic jams in the tollways are causing to both the motorist and commuters alike (sic), since I myself traverse the SLEX on a daily basis on my way to and from the office."

Cool under fire, huh? When it doesn't affect you, it won't affect the rest of the world?

I wish I could say the same, sir.

* * *

There's one saving grace though about the SLEX, which is the Skyway. And speaking of the Skyway, Citra has initiated an e-Pass special offer to make it easier for motorists to acquire their e-Pass tags.

The regular price of a tag is P2,700 (P2,200 for the tag and an initial load of P500 prepaid tolls).

You can now buy e-Pass tags at only P2,200 each, with P800 of that charged to prepaid tolls. It's like buying it at P1,400. A bargain, indeed. For more details, call 636-1035.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Why we continue to pay tolls when using the expressways more than 30 years after their construction is an aberration.

DENR CERTIFICATION

PowerAsia general manager Arnel Talens, far right, receives the Department of Environment and Natural Resources certification from DENR science research specialist II Arturo Bongco, far left. The DENR certification was given to PowerAsia's Snap-On Opacimeter model MD02 as a duly approved and accredited test equipment. Also shown are PowerAsia government sales manager and DENR science research specialist I Gerry C. Capulong.

Volvo now 75 years young

AND now, 75 years young, Volvo Car Corp. is rolling into a future where seven little words are all it will take to describe the automotive world:

"There are cars. And there is Volvo." But this is not actually anything new.

Volvo has always had a strong Scandinavian identity, which by definition has made the company different and unique over the years. The actual beginning is an excellent example.

The most Swedish of companies started with one of the most common Swedish traditions of them all: a crayfish party. On the night of July 25, 1924, Assar Gabrielsson and Gustaf Larson ran into one another at the Sturehof Restaurant in Stockholm. The two Swedish car enthusiasts ordered a huge plate of red crayfish—and a few hours later the company that would be known to the world as Volvo was born.

First car model

In the Swedish calendar, Jakob has his name day on July 25—the day of the crayfish party—and "Jakob" also became the nickname of the first car model.

Powered by a two-liter engine developing 28 hp, it rolled out of the factory on April 14, 1927.

Sales manager Hilding Johanson drove it into the open yard and a handful of onlookers cheered. The risk of a speeding ticket was limited in those days. Top speed was claimed to be 90 km per hour but that was regarded as somewhat optimistic.

Safety image

The founding fathers spoke about safety at a very early stage and the first collision ever involving a Volvo occurred even before the first car was sold.

In 1926, on the road from Stockholm to Gothenburg, one of the nine "Jakob" prototypes collided head-on with an American car.

The import became a wreck, while the Volvo emerged with just a few scratches.

A safety image was born.

Modest exports

Volvo Car Corp.'s export figures were initially modest: 24 cars in 1928, 27 in 1929.

Finland became the first export country. However, early Volvos were also shipped to Denmark, Cuba, the Netherlands, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Morocco and Argentina.

It wasn't until 1955 that Volvos were exported to the United States. Competing with the giant American brands was considered to be a daring adventure. Or, as a wise Swede put it, "Like selling refrigerators at the North Pole."

Close to being American

Few people know that Volvo was close to becoming an American company back in the late '20s after a tough start.

The legendary car manufacturer Charles Nash took the boat to Sweden to close the deal, but Gabrielsson himself and the ball bearing company SKF made a joint effort and managed to keep the company Swedish—just a few hours before the American guests arrived at the Port of Gothenburg.

In September of the same year, Volvo made a profit for the first time—and the company is still going strong. What about Nash? Well, that's another story...

US inspiration

During the '30s, inspiration came mainly from the US skilled Swedish engineers, who had worked for American car manufacturers in Detroit and returned to Sweden and Volvo. They injected the company with technological know-how and design influences.

The PV36 was launched in 1935. The beautiful "Carioca" had a new, bold rounded shape and innovative technology such as individual wheel suspension. It is still one of the real Volvo classics.

The PV800 became extremely popular among taxi drivers in the '40s. It was very large and comfortable. The PV800 was often used to rush pregnant women to the hospital. Several middle-aged Swedes of today were born in this Volvo.

Family sports car

The dawn of Volvo design tradition, as we know it, came with the PV444. This was a self-confident car, smaller than the US models, but larger and more dynamic than the small European cars of the time.

The PV 444 was roomy on the inside and had enough horsepower to be known as the "family sports car."

Very soon, it also became the favorite car of racing drivers. In those days, competitors sometimes refused to come to the start if a Volvo had entered the race. It was considered to be a waste of time and gas.

The racing and rally success of the PV444 was repeated in the '80s with the Volvo 240 Turbo in Europe and in the '90s with the Volvo S40 Racing in the United Kingdom.

Italian inspiration

In the '50s, the Italians led the design world.

Volvo Car Corp. appointed a chief designer for the first time. Jan Wilsgaard blended Italian inspiration with Swedish functionality in the PV120, the Amazon, which was born in 1956.

The PV120 emphasized the typical design features that have been part of Volvos ever since: the V-shaped hood, a distinctive shoulder line and the vertical grille, proud to be Volvo.

Whereas the wagon version of the PV444, the "Duett," was a totally functional means of transport; the Amazon became the first in a long line of Volvo wagons that blended prestige and practicality.

Synonymous with safety

The PV444 had been equipped with innovations like the laminated windscreen and the safety cage back in the '40s, but the '50s was the decade in which Volvo very definitely became synonymous with safety.

In 1959, Volvo changed the automotive world forever by introducing the three-point safety belt, invented in-house by Nils Bohlin.

The three-point safety belt is one of the most important life-saving innovations in human history—and it is still the basis of safety in every modern car.

Volvo received its first safety award in 1962. It was to be followed by many more.

A car for a 'Saint'

With this life-saving image in mind, what could be more natural than the next Volvo being driven by a "Saint"?

The P1800 was introduced in 1959. It was sporty, dynamic and elegant enough to be driven by Roger Moore in the British TV series "The Saint."

And, being Volvo, the functional Swedes couldn't stop themselves making a wagon version of this beautiful sports car. The tailgate of the P1800 ES has made a comeback several times since then: in the Volvo V40 and recently in the Volvo Safety Concept Car.

Cleanest car sold

The Volvo 140, introduced in 1966, was the first Volvo in which the sedan and wagon versions were developed side by side.

With the Volvo 140, followed by the 240, Volvo introduced a timeless design that attracted customers throughout the world for almost 30 years. This was due to the simple, clean lines, which took the virtue of functionality to new heights.

The most functional of them all was, of course, the Volvo 245, the mother of all Volvo wagons.

These two models also represent major advances in the fields of active and passive safety as well as in the field of environmental care.

The catalytic converter with the Lambda sensor was introduced in the United States in 1976. It represented a major breakthrough.

The 240 became the "Cleanest Car Sold in America"—and today the catalytic converter is the basis of emission control in every modern car.

Success in a boxy package

At a time when the automotive world was turning back to rounded shapes, Volvo Car Corp. once again chose its own path in the '80s.

The bold design of the Volvo 760 and Volvo 740 received its fair share of attention, but Volvo was confident that the new 700 Series would become a hit. They were right. Soon, Volvo's sales figures reached an all-time high.

The carrying capacity of the wagon version was a direct result of the design; where other manufacturers were cutting corners, the boxy shape of the Volvo created superior loading space.

The new era

The Volvo 850 was Volvo Car Corp.'s largest industrial project ever.

It heralded the start of a new era. Safety, reliability, functionality and environmental concern, all the world-famous Volvo virtues were wrapped up in a dynamic package that would gradually change the image of Volvo during the rest of the '90s.

The Volvo 850 has won more awards than any other Volvo car, both for its technology and safety level and for its design. The Volvo 850 sportswagon was voted the "world's most beautiful wagon" in Italy, where good design is a way of life.

New models, new advantages

The new Volvo S60 and its siblings on the same platform, the Volvo S80, Volvo V70, the Volvo Cross Country and now the XC90, are all excellent examples of the way the designers and engineers work hand in hand at a modern car company.

The basic architecture with its space-efficient, transverse, in-line engine, which was introduced in the Volvo 850, has given every one of the new Volvos its own advantages: extra legroom in the rear seat of the S80; more luggage space in the V70; the dynamic roofline of the S60 and now three rows of forward-facing seats in the XC90—creating seven seats in a size where competitors struggle to seat five.

Toward a bright future

So, what about the future?

Because Volvo Car Corp. designs cars which are completely digital, the designers and engineers work more rapidly and intelligently than most of their competitors.

Today, it's not only possible to design a car in a computer, Volvo's experts can also test-drive it and perform crash tests—all before a single prototype is built.

The cars of the future will change and so will society and the people driving these cars.

Volvo will be part of this development, still Scandinavian, still different.

VOLVO S60

RP to boost services exports to Japan via FTA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES is planning to boost its service exports to Japan under a planned free trade arrangement with the world's second biggest economy.

A source from the Department of Trade and Industry said the Philippines would seek greater access to the Japanese market for the country's services sector ranging from entertainment to information and communication technology as a major consideration for a Free Trade Area.

The DTI source said that Japan was amenable to opening up its services sector rather than its highly valued farm sector to Filipinos. The source, however, said that the country would still push for wider market access to Japan for Philippine fruits and other agricultural products under the FTA.

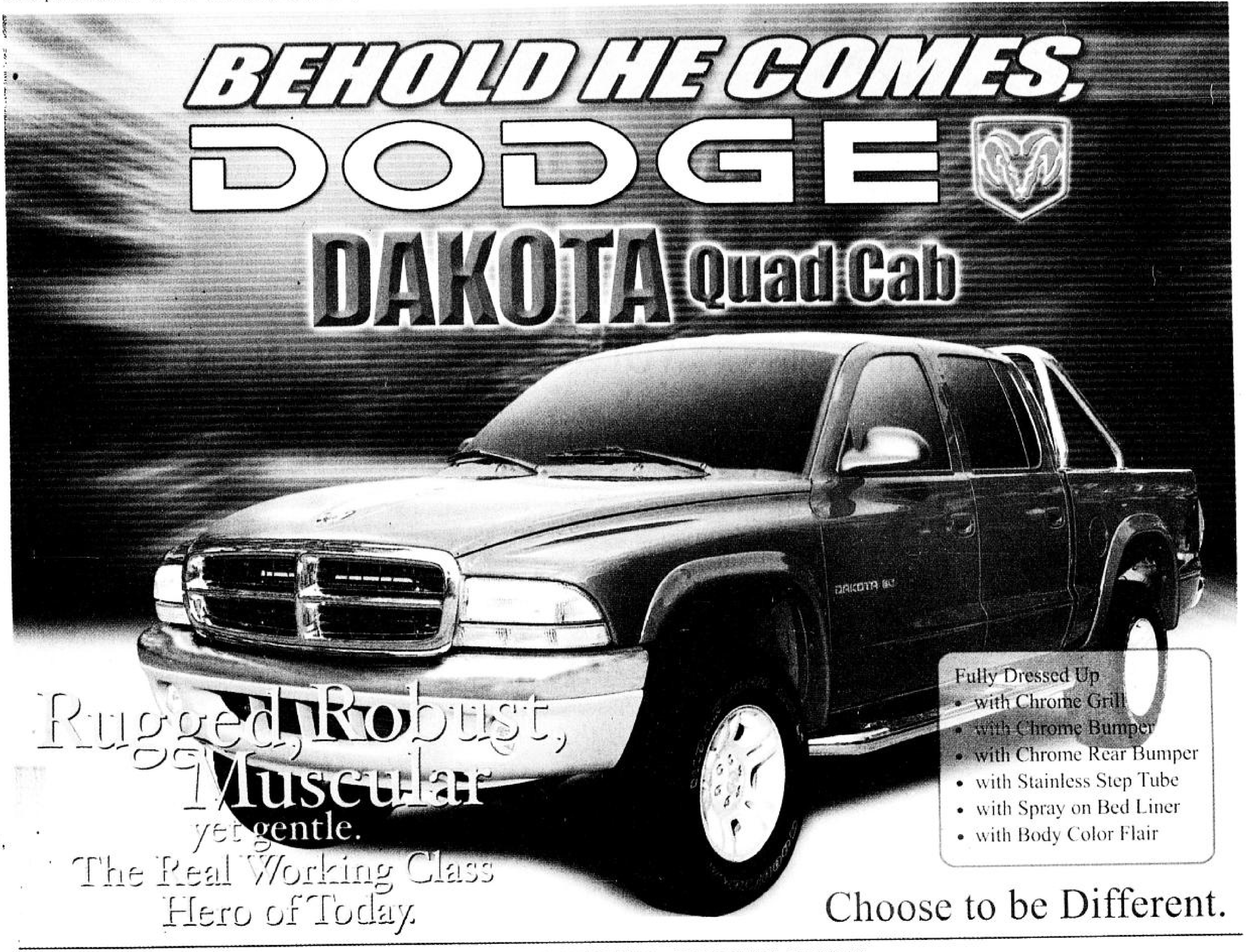
He said the Philippine government was leaning toward forging bilateral trade pacts with developed countries such as Japan rather than negotiating with other Asean countries for a regional FTA.

The source said negotiations for an Asean FTA were futile considering that the Asean could not authorize such a deal without the consent of each member country. This is why the Philippines should conduct negotiations on a bilateral basis in order to focus on issues that affect both economies, he added.

Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi raised his country's interest in forming an FTA with the Philippines during his visit to the country a few months ago.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II reckoned that an FTA with Japan was a better fit than a similar arrangement being proposed with China. Roxas said most Japanese products were not produced locally while Philippine products have a big market in Japan.

Japan is the country's second largest trading partner after the United States. The top Philippine exports to Japan are semiconductor devices; storage units; finished electrical machinery; machine parts and accessories and fresh bananas. The top Philippine imports from Japan are parts for the manufacture of electronic machinery; machinery and mechanical appliances; parts and accessories electronic integrated circuits and microassemblies.



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Fit for heroes and kings

By Anne A. Jambora

IF studying Philippine history doesn't interest everybody, then partaking of the gastronomic feast our heroes shared will. Journey into the past and relish the culinary favorites of José Rizal and Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, among many others—from the food that fueled the Katipuneros during the Revolution to desserts whipped up by the Women of Malolos. History never tasted this good.

But it doesn't stop there. After the engaging education of the palate, another feast to tickle the curiosity follows. Care to know what the royalty of Thailand eats? Savor authentic royal cuisine in a menu exclusively concocted for Thailand's royal family. Believe it or not, it's a cuisine Thai commoners haven't even heard of or tasted.

Dusit Hotel Nikko celebrates "A Festival of Heroes and Kings," a back-to-back Filipino and Thai food festival in observance of the Fil-Thai Friendship Week, June 7-21. "The Heroes' Feast," June 7-14 at The Café, Lobby Level, features heroes' menu painstakingly researched over the years by food historian Mila Enriquez. "The King's Table," June 14-21 at the Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant, Mezzanine Level, is prepared by no less than Suwattee "Kun Mem" Teebrapath, who once served the king as chef for four years.

Food and history

The Philippine fare is divided into five courses: *pampagana* (appetizer), *ensalada* (salad), *sopas* (soup), *tampok na potahe* (hot items) and *panghimagas* (dessert). Most of the items are familiar, *lutong bahay* delicacies, minus the present-day rich sauces and sinful preparations. The same can be said for the desserts. For instance, Leche Flan del Mar is made of only three eggs, *gulaman*, carabao's milk and *dayap* rind—definitely not too thick and cloying.

An exotic yet amazingly tender meat is the tasty Tapang Usa, the Katipuneros' provision for battle that they stored inside *pambisa* or belt bags, together with bullets, assorted war requisites and, yes, *anting-antings*. For the survivors of the Battle of Tirad Pass, Nilasing na Mangga ng Beterano—mangoes mixed with sugar and beer—was a favorite; even Gen. Gregorio del Pilar and his men used it as *pulutan* during drinking gatherings.

Tinolang Manok using native chicken was Rizal's favorite. Ensalada ni General Aguinaldo is an asparagus salad served during the Malolos Congress' French-inspired banquet in Jan. 23, 1899.

"Food reflects our history," says Enriquez. She says even during the barter-trade period, Filipinos discovered new ingredients and in-

FIT/ p.C2

MILAGROS Enriquez, food historian and executive sous chef Bernie Tapiador

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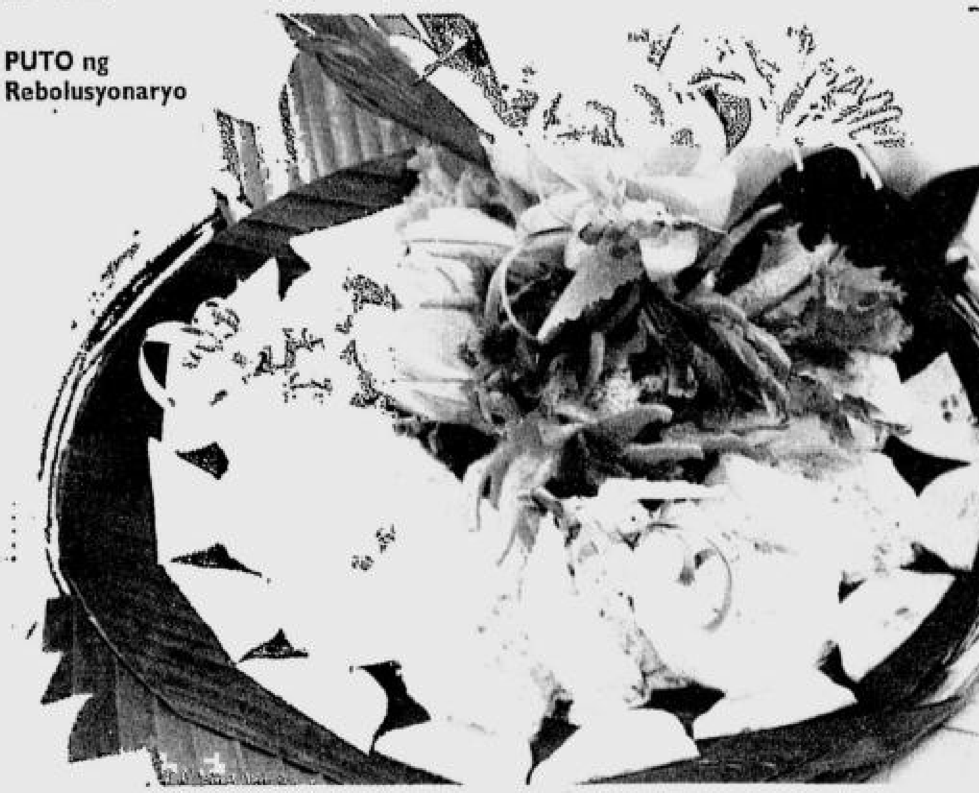

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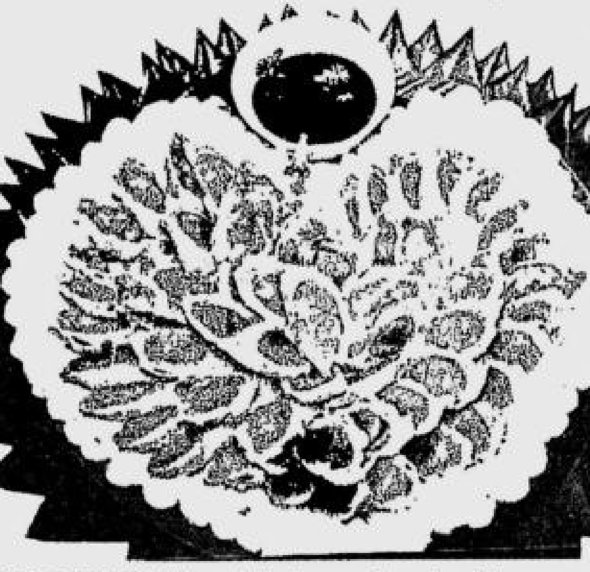
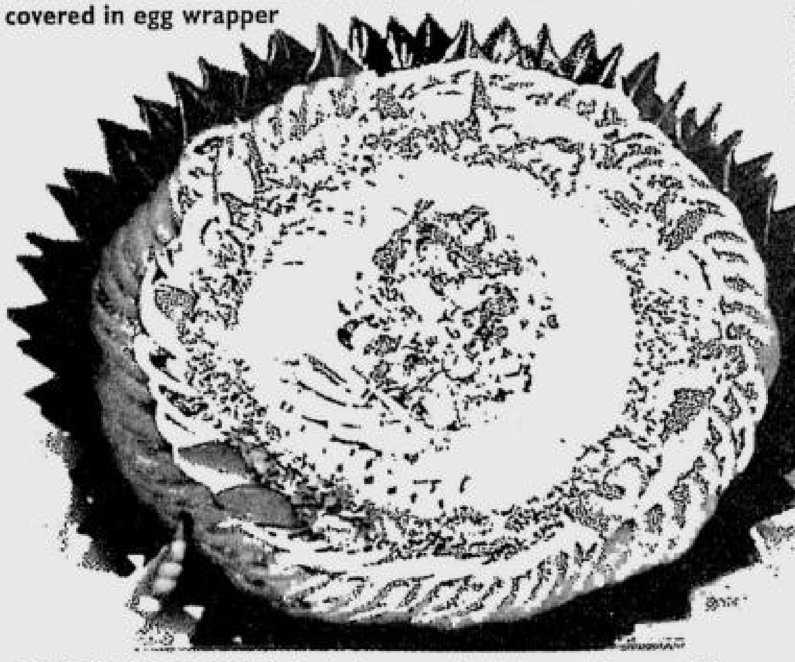
Fit for heroes and kings



KALAWEG SOTSI. Minced shrimp and pork with sauce and covered in egg wrapper



ME KAY CHOM SUAN. Boiled egg and chicken with vegetable salad

NILASING na Mangga

From page C1

corporated them in their fare. "We have to preserve our culinary fare. In this festival, the food prepared here is what our heroes ate and shared through triumph and defeat."

Seventy-nine-year-old Enriquez is a member of Kaanak 1896, in whose roster are sons and daughters of the revolution. Her father-in-law's cook was the son of the Katipuneros' chef. He himself served the Katipuneros when he was 14 years old. From him, and numerous other sources, Enriquez slowly compiled menu after menu of that period.

The feast includes Lapu-Lapu ni Gen. Douglas MacArthur, wrapped and steamed in banana leaves; Asado de Carajay ng Ilustrado, pot roast cooked with beer instead of wine in defiance of the Spaniards; Ensaymada ng Malolos, a large *ensaymada* said to be prepared by the Women of Malolos, among others.

Fit for a king

"The King's Table," on the other hand, is another rare treat for Filipinos. Chef Suwattee is the former royal chef of Thailand; so was her grandmother. At the tender age of 7, she started tinkering in the kitchen with grandma and from there developed a deep passion for cooking. Everyone in her family, she says, can cook. Chef Suwattee also does lovely fruit and soap carvings—done in 15 and 5 minutes, respectively.

For appetizer, there's Kalaweg Sotsi, minced shrimp and pork with sauce in egg wrapper; the victorious Keng Jud Luk Lak or egg sausage soup; and Me Kay Chom Suan, boiled chicken and egg with vegetable salad that's devastatingly hot.

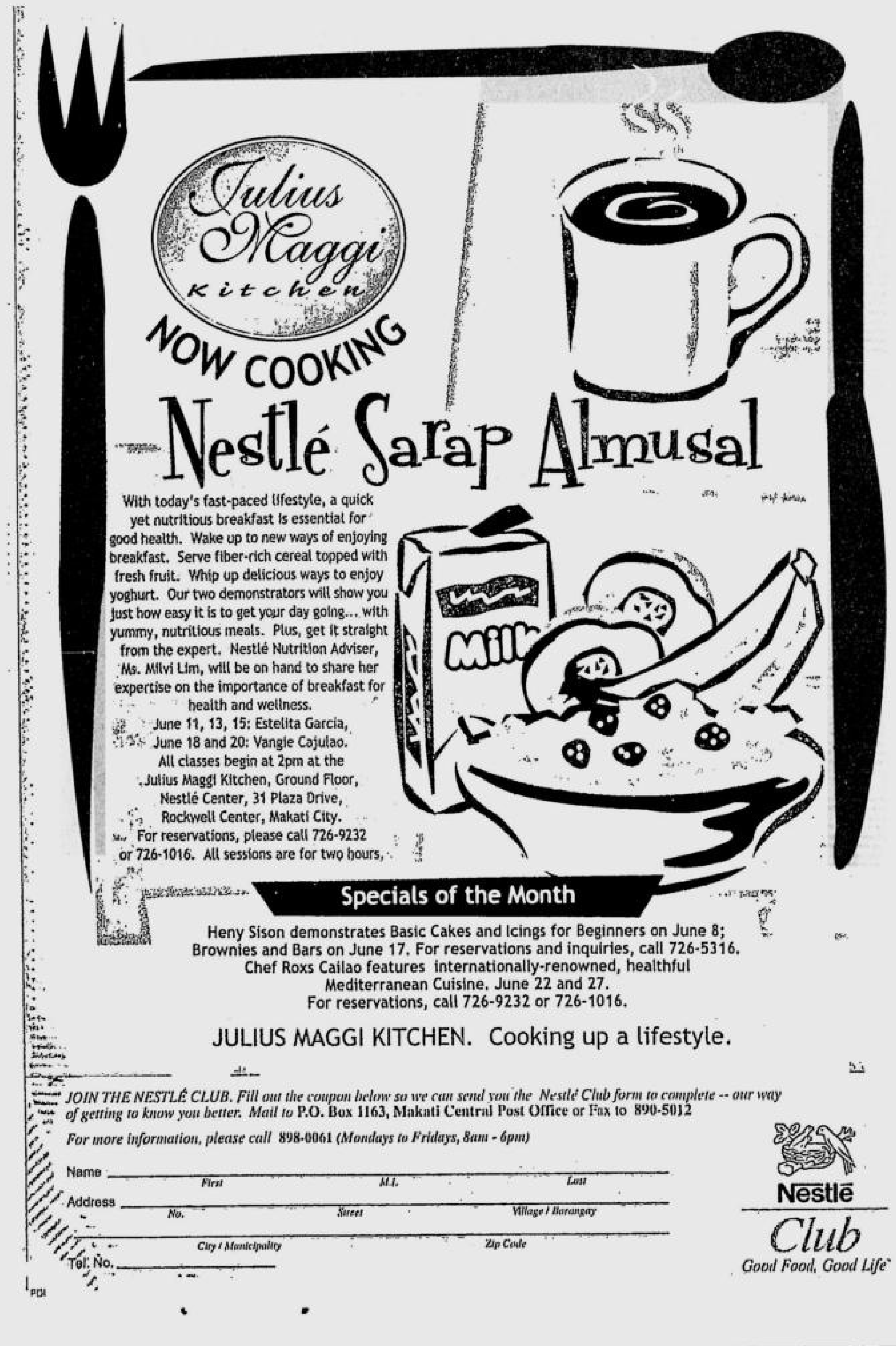
CHEF Suwattee Teebrapath of the Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant

The main difference between Filipino and Thai cooking, of course, is the use of spices. Although most Thai dishes are indeed hot and spicy, the chef says majority actually do not border on the tongue-burning and sweat-inducing formulation. "Some provinces prepare food really hot, but generally it's just between mild to hot. Filipinos love to prepare sweet and sour food, and occasionally it's just a little too sweet. In Thailand, it's spicy, salty, sour and a little sweet."

Not to be missed is Pet Op Karfe, meticulously prepared duck sautéed in coffee juice that's tender to the bone and light on the tummy. There's also Pia Lam Durn Din, beef with peanut sauce and *kangkong*, and Talay Klang, sautéed pork in honey sauce. A variation of the Filipino *halo-halo* that's not as sweet, but a winner just the same is Tap Tim Sayam, colorful water chestnuts with coconut milk and shaved ice.

"We are offering the royal cuisine during the festival only. After the festival, we go back to our regular menu," Chef Suwattee says.

Both festivals are available for lunch or dinner. Dine like the kings or feast like the heroes, Dusit Hotel Nikko is the place to go for a one-of-a-kind culinary experience.



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June 11, 13, 15: Estelita Garcia,
June 18 and 20: Vangie Cajulao.
All classes begin at 2pm at the
Julius Maggi Kitchen, Ground Floor,
Nestlé Center, 31 Plaza Drive,
Rockwell Center, Makati City.
For reservations, please call 726-9232 or 726-1016. All sessions are for two hours.

Specials of the Month

Heny Sison demonstrates Basic Cakes and Icings for Beginners on June 8; Brownies and Bars on June 17. For reservations and inquiries, call 726-5316.
Chef Roxs Cailao features internationally-renowned, healthful Mediterranean Cuisine. June 22 and 27.
For reservations, call 726-9232 or 726-1016.

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PDI

'DONUT DE FRUTA'

Six varieties of fruit-flavored donuts—grape, *macapuno*, green apple, melon, strawberry and mango—are now in the market from Dunkin Donuts, the country's largest donut chain. The promo entices customers to purchase a dozen of the new variant for P99 and save at least P45. The offer comes with a specially designed box and runs until June 14 at all participating outlets nationwide.

Learn new recipes and make Father's Day special

SAN MIGUEL-PUREFOODS Culinary Center celebrates Father's Day with a series of cooking demonstrations at different SM Malls. You can learn easy and delicious recipes that will help make Father's Day special for your own Dad.

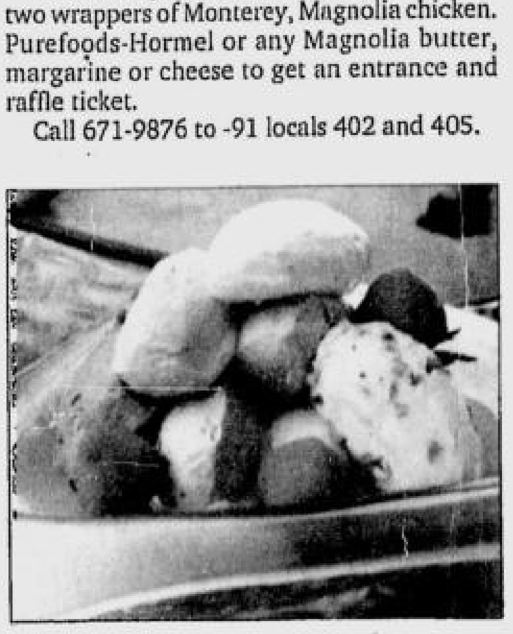
All cooking demos will start at 2 p.m. and will be held on these dates and at these venues: June 8 (Saturday), SM Fairview Activity Center; June 14 (Friday), SM City Bacoor Activity Center; June 15 (Saturday), Storyland in SM Southmall, and June 22 (Saturday), Storyland in SM Fairview.

Interested participants should present any two wrappers of Monterey, Magnolia chicken. Purefoods-Hormel or any Magnolia butter, margarine or cheese to get an entrance and raffle ticket.

Call 671-9876 to -91 locals 402 and 405.

LAST CALL FOR SUMMER

Color and consistency are keys when it comes to the Italian gelato. In coffee, mocha, pistachio, almond, vanilla, honey, fig, blueberry, banana and rum raisin flavors, the gelato is a hit at The Peninsula Manila's Italian restaurant Mi Piace. According to the hotel's resident Italian chef Michele Mingozzi and executive pastry chef Stephan Jegat, the term "*gelato* is now often used in Italy for any ice cream or water ice, although technically only those that are dairy-based qualify." Call 887-2888 local 2947/2952.



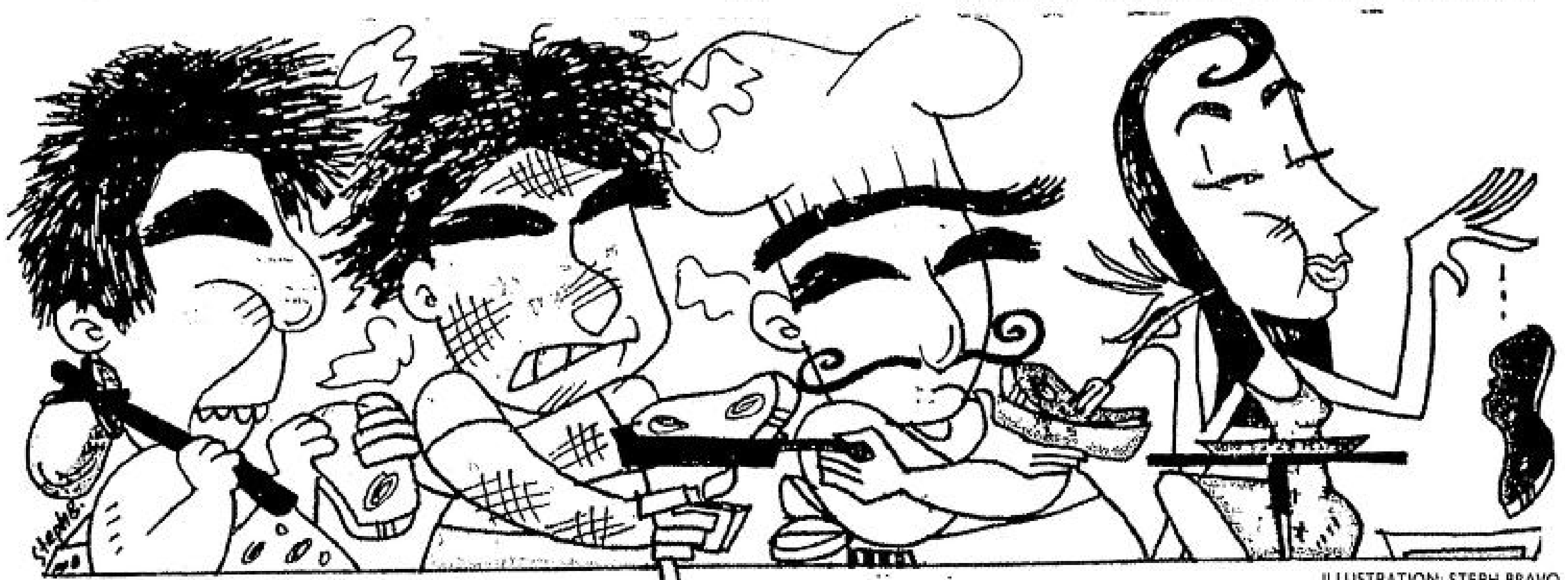


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Glass ceiling for chefs

THE MAD TEA PARTY

Clinton Palanca

A FRIEND and I were recently discussing an observation of hers. In earlier times, in order to get ahead in society, one had to have skills, like the ability to make fire or to hunt really well; and if you could do both and factor polynomials as well, you received the respect of your peers and stood a very good chance of becoming tribe leader. These days, all you need is a pretty face and nice clothes.

It's true that I have a chip on my shoulder about models and their ability to make money by sitting still; and it is equally true that I haven't plumbed the depths of hardship. But from here in the middle I have a fairly good view of the landscape, and can attest to the fact that the ones who exert the most labor (hauling concrete, ploughing fields, driving trucks on long-haul journeys) are paid minimum wage and are sacked after six months; while models, who often come from wealthy families to begin with, wander in sometime in the afternoon, smile for the camera, and walk off with P250,000. In addition, they get to travel for free, go to bed with the most desirable members of the opposite sex, and are approached for autographs. Even in the business world, manufacturers deal with narrow profit margins and are subject to market and currency fluctuations, strikes and the risk of obsolescence; those who deal with mergers and acquisitions push pieces of paper around, sign a couple of checks and pocket several million in one afternoon.

Backbone

Where do chefs fit into all of this? Well, let's first of all make a distinction about the various types of chefs around. There are career chefs, who probably started out as busboys or dishwashers and because they worked hard, were honest, and were good learners, eventually rose to a position of responsibility. These people are the backbone of any restaurant; and if you're a restaurant owner and have any of these, give them a pay raise, a share in the holdings, or whatever it takes to keep them there and keep them happy. But there's a glass ceiling for people like these: even if they are being paid stupendously well, which is usually not the case, it's unlikely that they'll be able to cough up the P2 million (at the very least) that is needed to start up a restaurant. This basically means they have to get themselves backers, and if there are several backers and one person putting in "industrial" capital, it boils down to working for a company again.

But these days, now that being a chef is no longer the domain of rich kids with low IQ's who were sent to Switzerland because they got kicked out of university, a lot of intelligent and well-meaning people are entering the profession of their own accord. It has become a glamorous field with its own superstars; and since the clientele is an upscale one, it is one of those professions which (along with hair and makeup stylists, clothing designers and interior decorators) attract the sort of individuals who enjoy the company of rich people and who, because of their proximity to the latter, sometimes develop the illusion of being "one of them," rather than being just a more exalted species of hired help. More often than not, these are dreamers who have watched too many cooking shows; they do have some proficiency in the kitchen; and they enjoy eating out and entertaining at home, and so having one's own restaurant sounds like throwing a dinner party every night and getting paid for it to boot.

And so off they go starry-eyed to the Culinary Institute of America or Le Cordon Bleu, and when they get back here spouting technical terms, the classical legacy of Escoffier, and a military sense of rigor and discipline; they are dismayed to find that no one here cares whether you made the stock by boiling veal bones for 12 hours or by opening a can, that customers are ill-informed but dislike being made to feel that way, and that no matter how many times you tell the staff to sweeten the sauce using carrots and shallots, they will resort to the simple expediency of putting in a pinch of sugar. This isn't a country that cares about haute cuisine; what they want is all-you-can-eat with bottomless iced tea. If they want to impress their dates, they'll go to a hotel restaurant for candlelight and piano music. Those who are really serious about food eat at each other's houses, or get Margarita Fores to cater.

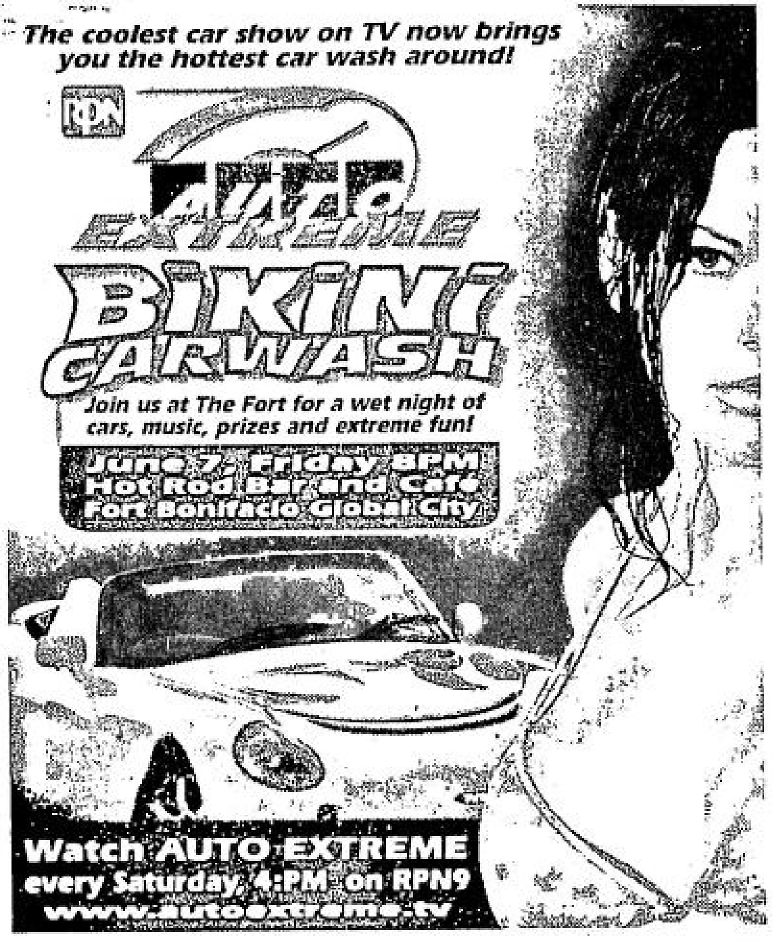
Unrewarding

This is not a manifesto of pessimism. I'm only stating what everyone more or less knows; and for those who didn't, well, that's how it is. But then every month some new restaurant opens, and every so often I hear about some old classmate leaving behind a promising career in law or finance to go to cooking school, or to open a restaurant. I can tell you, from experience, what you're going to have to face: the indifference of the public, a wait-and-see silence from the critics, pilferage from dishonest staff members, crooked tax officials, uncooperative management from lessors, machines that break down and take weeks to fix, tax forms, inconsistent suppliers, and at least one customer every night who wants the sauce on the side instead of on top and is allergic to tomatoes and wants to replace the rice siding with baked macaroni but without cheese.

In other words, being a chef and running a restaurant is one of the most unrewarding professions you can get yourself into, and if you can be a model then for God's sake go and do so. These days, what happens is that the guy who hunts hands over the meat to the guy who makes fire; and then the chef comes in and cooks the meat over the fire and gives it to the model, who eats about half of it because he has to watch his protein intake. He then tosses some coins down to us; we go and get ourselves drunk, and he goes off to get into the skirt of some female model. And this, apparently, is what is called evolution.

E-mail the author at clinton@i-manila.com.ph

It used to be that rich kids with low IQ's were sent to Switzerland because they got kicked out of university; now a lot of intelligent and well-meaning people are entering the profession of their own accord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JUNE CLASS SCHEDULE

June 8, Saturday, 9-12:30 pm BROWNIES GALORE Chocolate Cheesecake Brownies, Cappuccino Brownies, Kahlua Brownies, Chocolate Fudge Brownies, White Chocolate Pecan Brownies P1,200

June 8, Saturday, 2-5:00 pm THAI COOKING 1 with guest CHEF WINNAI KHAROMRUEN and SYLVIA CANCIO Tom Kha Gai, Tom Yum Goong, Phad Thai Noodles, Steamed Lapu-lapu, Thai Barbecue (Chicken, Pork and Squid), Spicy Squid Salad, Flaming Seafood Curry P1,200

June 10, Monday, 1:30-5:30 pm PIES AND CHEESECAKES Apple Pie with Streusel, Blueberry Cheesecake, No Bake Cheesecake, Oreo Cheesecake, Quiche Lorraine P1,200

June 13, Wednesday, 2-5 pm Join our Wednesday Cooking Club! New recipes added weekly - from Soups to Desserts! Special Price of P 800/session Fresh Oysters with Assorted Garnishes, Risotto Primavera, Rack of Lamb with Honey -Nut Crust, Vegetable and Cheese Strudel, Peach Cobbler

June 14, Friday, 1-6 pm YEAST DOUGHS Pan de Sal, Ensaimada Espasyal (w/ Cheese & Ube Filling), Dinner Rolls, Pear Walnut Bread P1,200

June 15, Saturday, 9-12 nn BASIC BAKING 1 from measuring to presentation!

Chiffon Cake: Coffee Crunch Cake, Sponge Cake: Strawberry and White Chocolate Trifle, Rich Butter Cake, Pie Crust American apple Pie P1,200

June 15, Saturday, 2-5 pm THAI COOKING 2 with guest Chef WINNAI KHAROMRUEN and SYLVIA CANCIO Glass Noodle Salad, Bagoong Rice, Catfish Salad, Thai Kangkong, Shrimp Pancake, Century Egg Salad, Mango with Sticky Rice P 1,200

June 17, Monday, 1:30 – 4:30 BAKESHOP FAVOURITES Lenguas de Gato, Soft Mamon, Maple- Pecan Cinnamon Rolls, Sticky Brownies, Apple Upside Down Cake P1,000

June 19, Wednesday 9 – 12 nn PASTAS and MORE Homemade Pasta, Basic Tomato Sauce, Linguini Carbonara, Spaghetti Putanesca, Lasagna, Seafood Pasta, Penne a la Vodka P1,000

June 19, Wednesday Cooking Club 2- 5 pm

Wild Mushroom Salad, Moroccan Chicken with Lemon and Olives, Eggplant Lasagna with Sundried Tomatoes, Sea Bass w/ Vegetable Stir Fry, Lemon Tart P800

June 21, Friday, BREAD MAKING 2, 1:30 – 5:30pm Croissants, Carrot Bread, Raisin Bread, Gruyere Garlic Bread, Banana Bread P1,000

June 22, Saturday, 9-12:30 nn BASIC BAKING 2 with Frostings and Icings

Rich and Moist Devil's Food Cake with Chocolate Sour Cream Frosting, Apple Walnut Cake with Creamy Caramel Frosting, Chocolate Decadent Cake with Chocolate Fudge Icing and Caramel Sauce, Maple Walnut Cake with Fluffy White Frosting P1,200

June 24, Monday BAKING 8, 2 - 5:30 pm ELEGANT DESSERTS, Hazelnut and Tangerine Tiramisu, Mango Napoleons, Individual Baked Alaska, Capuccino Brownies with White Chocolate Espresso Sauce P1,200

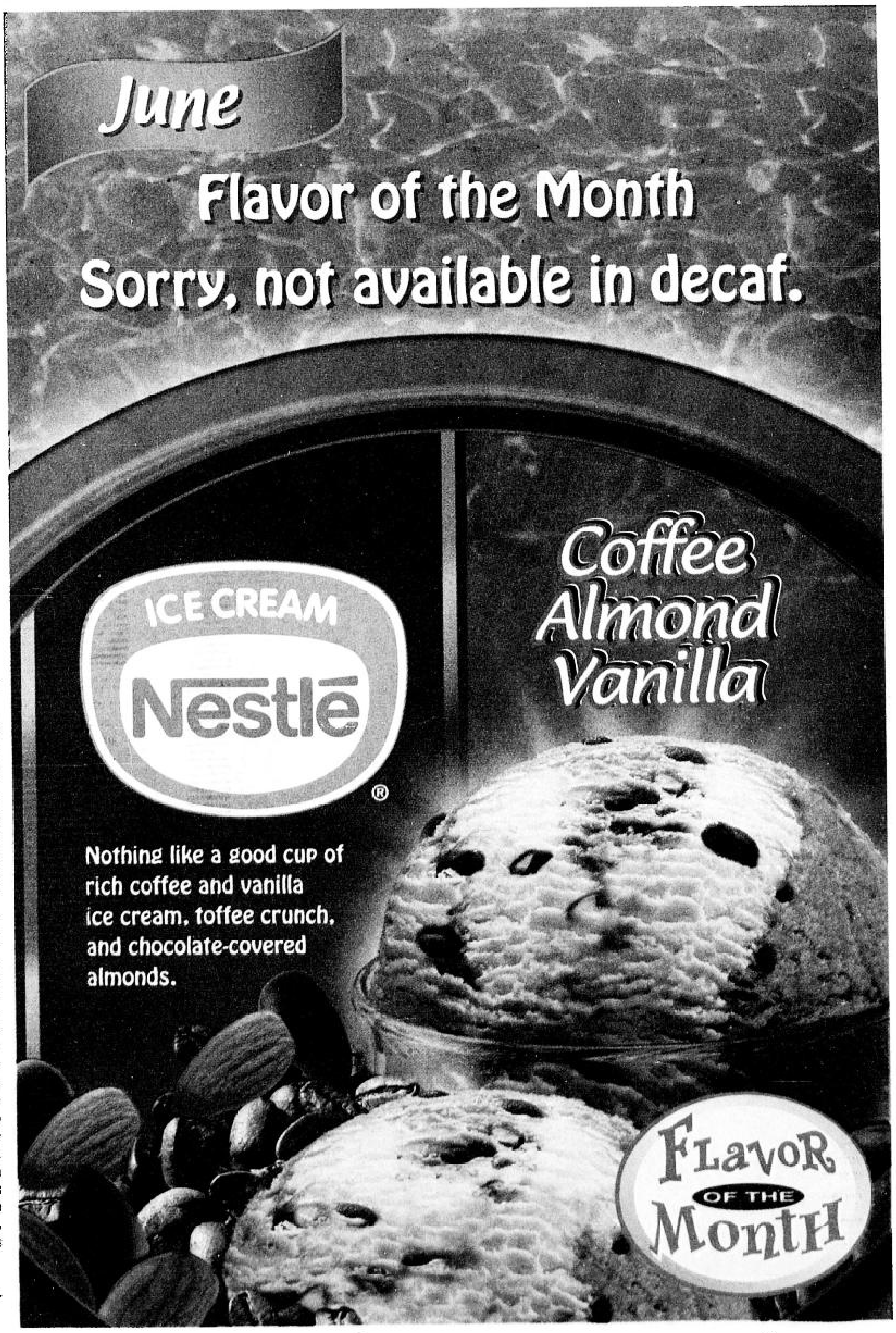
June 26, Wednesday Cooking Club, 2-5 pm, PILIPINO COOKING 1 Adobong Kuhol, Rellenong Pusit, Bistek Tagalog, Crispy Ukoy, Lettuce Salad, Pampango Style, Lechon sa Horno, Tri-colored Maja P800

June 28, Friday 2-5:30 A TURKEY DINNER Roasted Onion and Garlic Soup, Green Salad with Orange Vinaigrette, Fresh Oysters with Assorted Garnishes, Roast Herbed Turkey with Shiitake Mushroom Gravy, Pecan Pie P1,200

June 29, Saturday, 9- 12 nn A THAI DINNER Herbed and Sweetened Shrimps, Seafood Soup with Coconut Milk, Spiced Salad of Grilled Beef with Grapes, Herbed Salad with Winged Beans, Steamed Fish, Crispy, Sweetened Bananas, Thai Iced Tea P1,000

June 29, Saturday, 2-5 pm ASIAN COOKING, Hainanese Chicken Rice, Vietnamese Springrolls, Spicy Kangkong, Chili Crab, Claypot Chicken Rice, Peking Candied Apples P1,000

E-mail Address: sylvia_cancio@hotmail.com
Please call for reservation!


June
Flavor of the Month
Sorry, not available in decaf.
ICE CREAM
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Coffee Almond Vanilla
Nothing like a good cup of rich coffee and vanilla ice cream, toffee crunch, and chocolate-covered almonds.
FLAVOR OF THE MONTH

Illustrious menu for historical browsing

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

IT IS NAMED after the Filipino elite of the 19th century. In the Spanish regime, when the natives were called *indios*, those of mixed blood, *mestizos* or *criollos*, Spanish residents, *insulares or peninsulares* (born in the islands or on the peninsula) and the Philippine elite, generally land-owning and educated in Europe, were the *ilustrados*. Naming a restaurant Ilustrado thus bestows on it a temper, an ambiance, a focus, a history, and great sources for food.

The name has impact ("*may dating*," one might say), and as it happens, the restaurant also has a great and appropriate location: Intramuros, the Spanish "noble and ever loyal" walled city. One drives in through Puerta Real (the major one of the five gates into Intramuros) or Puerta Parian, and before reaching the Cathedral entrance, turns into what seems to be a residential courtyard, and finds oneself in a garden with bougainvillea, tall *macopa*, and a red brick house: Ilustrado, and its bar and café, called Kuatro Kantos. The address is regal: 744 Calle Real del Palacio (General Luna St.), Intramuros (tels. 527-3674 to -75; 527-2319; fax 527-2345). Fronting the street is a large building housing the Silahis shop of artifacts; the restaurant is in the building in back, across the garden.

Heroic

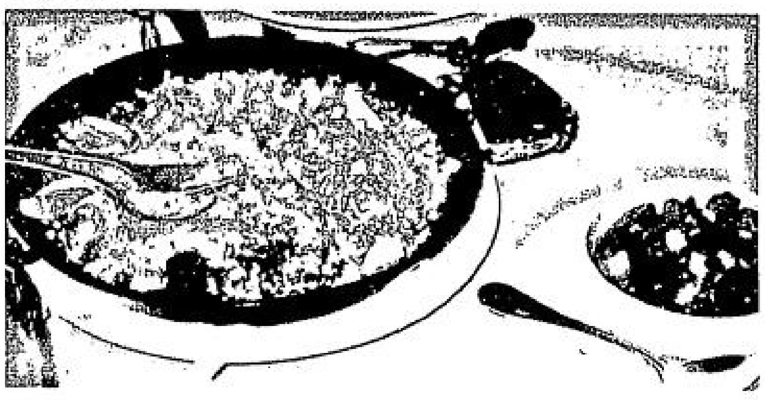
Conscious of the heritage of name and place, owners Bonnie and Rose Pimentel have constantly sought to shape menus reflecting Spanish, Filipino, Hispanic Filipino, and European cuisines, and thus Philippine history in microcosm. Occasional special forays are made, with the advice and guidance of museologist and food historian Cora Alvina (director of the National Museum), to seek out dishes that reflect the life and times of Philippine heroes: Andres Bonifacio, Jose Rizal, General Malvar, and others.

We started, for example, with *umbuyan*, flaked *tinapang* Salinas rolled in blanched *pechay* leaves and baked, said to have been current in the time of Bonifacio and the Katipunan. This year's Santacruzan menu features Sentenciado, *patang baboy* cooked in bouillion and broiled; Constantino, chicken breast cooked with mustard; Caridad, a gingery clam soup; Ani sa Mayo, a rice and seafood salad; and Reina Saba, a banana dessert with toasted almonds and Amaretto.

Located in an Intramuros courtyard, Ilustrado lives up to its genteel name with food that speaks of the past, the present and the future

BAKED oysters on the half-shell

UMBUYAN



PAELLA and *callos*

The menu lends itself to historical browsing. Among the Ilustrado specialties are dishes now found in almost all Hispanic restaurants, which were then Sunday or fiesta fare in many Filipino homes. Paella Ilustrado (for two; allow 20 minutes) is, among the many *paellas* in Metro Manila today, one of the most conventional: Valencia in origin, rich in seafood and chorizos, with a good crusty *tutong*. Callos Madrilena is thick and rich, and of course, there is Lengua con Setas.

Indigenous specialties are represented by Bonoan Bangus Relleno, Kare-Kare (ox tail and tripe), Kalderetang Kambing, Adobong Usa, Sinigang sa Miso (of Norwegian salmon head), and an excellent Bagnet with KBL *(kamatis-bagoong-lasuna)* sauce. It was a superlative *lechon kawali*, crisp throughout, and the dip of sliced tomatoes, liquid *bagoong* and chopped garlic—a perfect foil. Although we all muttered about fat and cholesterol, we all happily dipped in with little guilt and much pleasure.

This lunch celebrated John's birthday, and had started with cups of minestrone for all. Then we each wandered off into the menu: native Bagnet for me, Spanish *paella* and *callos* for John and Jonathan, and Stuffed Chicken Leg Reinette with Caramelized Onion for Juliet, the youngest in the group. Interesting, I thought, how the "elders" had gone for tradition, history and memory, and the youngest had reached outward for the new.

There is much more on the menu. For appetizer, I had longed for the Calf's Brain in Filo Pastry with Sweet Balsamic Vinegar, but it was not available. Calf's brain is a delicacy I have long missed, since the days when one could have it daily at Signor Lammoglia's Cucina Italiana on Padre Faura Street. Now it is hardly ever featured on restaurant menus.

Also listed are baked oysters on the half shell, three ways, Thai catfish salad with green mango, Bonuan Bangus *lumpia* in sweet and spicy sauce, smoked *tanguingue* terrine, and salads. Soups offered are Bouillabaisse Provencale or Oxtail Soup with Port Wine.

Main meat

Meat entrees include US Black Angus Prime Rib Steak Teriyaki; Roast Leg of Venison; US Muscovy Duckling with Lemon Honey Sauce; Crepinette of New Zealand Lamb Loin with Ginger Bread Sauce and Spinach Spatzle; Grilled Pork Spareribs in five sauces; and Filets Mignons Japonaise.

There is, of course, Chilean Seabass (what restaurant these days does not?), but with Negros Sole, Crabmeat, and Madeira sauce; also, grilled lobster or blue marlin steak, and baked *pampano*; as well as Norwegian Salmon Fillet and Baby Octopus with Vegetable Ragout and Dill cream sauce.

The Kuatro Kantos Bar & Café features Filipino breakfasts (beef *tapa*, corned beef, *daing na bangus*, chicken pork *adobo*, Vigan *longanisa*, *paksiw na tiyan ng bangus* with *silog*: fried rice, egg, coffee or tea. Also, sandwiches (e.g. Jamon Serrano and Raclette Cheese; Roast Beef); home-made *pan de sal* with Jamon China and Queso de Bola; merienda fare like *pancit palabok* with bonnet and *miki-bihon guisado*. Pastas too: Calamari Pata Adobo, Pasta Machito, Spinach and Mushroom Lasagna and more. And finally, temper coolers like *halo-halo* and *gulaman at sago* with *pandan*.

On the Ilustrado side, there are two dense pages of dessert, but we all turned traditionalists and had *pinipig* ice cream, *pandan* ice cream and one tall slice of *sans rival*. And hot, dark coffee.

The thoughtful service, the gracious ambiance, the trees and flowers visible through the windows and especially the food that spoke of memories past, present experience, and future potential, made for a pleasure-filled experience one would want repeated.

JONATHAN Best being served *paella*

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